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Kuhn, Anne W.



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Thesis

THE INFLUENCE OF THE GERMAN
PROTESTANT REFORMATION UPON THE
MUSIC WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH

by

Anne Wicker Kuhn

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Approved

by

First Reader *H. Augustine Smith*
Professor of *Church Music*

Second Reader *Henry H. Meyer*
Professor of *Religious Education*



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Nature of the Inquiry.

During the first quarter of the sixteenth century, there came to concrescence a religious revolution whose antecedents had been manifesting themselves for several centuries. That movement was known as the Lutheran Reformation. It was destined to react profoundly upon every phase of German life. Historians have dwelt at length upon the political and social repercussions of the Reformation; and in giving emphasis to these aspects of the question, have frequently neglected the cultural impact of the new movement.

After the passing of four centuries, it is at last possible to more accurately evaluate these forces, and to trace the course of their development. Of the avenues by which the Reformation affected German culture, none is more significant than the effect of the music of the early Lutheran movement upon the later development of musical art in the land which cradled infant Protestantism. Moreover, the music which was born of the German Reformation was of such a character that it could not long lie undiscovered by those other lands which shared the new religious reform.

The music of the early Lutheran Church, therefore, not only shaped the German musical tradition for decades to come, but likewise found its way, through translations, into

the religious life of the English-speaking peoples, and exerted a profound influence upon the music worship of Anglo-American Protestantism.

Inasmuch as the effect of the German Reformation upon the German musical tradition has heretofore been largely traced as but an incidental feature of the Reformation, it is the purpose of this research to pursue an investigation of the musical aspect of the movement. To accomplish this it will be necessary to trace the antecedents of the music which Luther and his associates utilized in the launching of the Reformation. This will involve a consideration of the musical situation in the Roman Church in the centuries preceding the times of Luther.

To an understanding of the function of music within Protestantism, an investigation of the liturgical development of Lutheranism is essential, since the Reformation by Luther represented, not only outward changes in ritual, but a fundamental alteration in the general theory of worship.

Again, the conditions under which the German Reformation developed were such that the employment of popular sacred music served purposes beyond that of merely contributing to the form of worship. For the Reformation carried with itself certain doctrinal changes, together with a necessity for an indoctrination of the laity. This investigation shall, therefore, seek to analyze the scene from which the Chorale

was derived, the development of the Chorale within the first century of Lutheranism, its purpose and abiding influence within the German musical tradition, its transposition into Anglo-American Church life, and its abiding influence upon the music worship there.

B. Extent of the Inquiry.

In the pursuit of such a subject, there is an obvious need for a limitation of the scope of the inquiry. The investigation of the pre-Reformation background is confined to those aspects of the musical situation which are most directly contributive to the Lutheran worship music. Only such an analysis of the Lutheran reform of the Liturgy shall be included as shall be essential to an understanding of the musical pattern of the early Evangelical Church.

Other forces for Reformation early impinged upon the boundaries of Lutheranism, notably those from Moravia, Zürich, and Geneva. Each of these had a significant musical aspect, which however must remain outside the field of this inquiry.

The study of the Chorale , including examination of its antecedents, tracing of the course of its development, and consideration of its function and significance in early Lutheranism, forms the backbone of this Thesis. From such an inquiry, conclusions may be drawn which shall prove to

have applicability to the consideration of the religious life of lands outside Germany, and especially in English-speaking countries.

Another obvious limitation of the field must occur in the investigation of the religious scene in Great Britain and America; in this respect, it shall be the plan of the writer to give attention to those branches of Church-life which perpetuate the Lutheran tradition of music worship, and to make specific examination of only a few representative hymnals in use by these branches.

C. Status of the Present Investigation of the Subject.

The Thesis represents, not a systematic review of one or several books upon this subject, but a synthesis of the main conclusions reached by several writers, each of whom has made an invaluable contribution to the study of one or more phases of the subject.

In the field of historical investigation of the broad field of German Hymnology, the classic work is the six-volume Geschichte des Kirchenliedes, by Eduard Emil Koch, "Dekan, ordentlichem Mitglied" of the Historical-Theological Society of Leipzig. This production has given a complete coverage of German sacred song, beginning with the music of the Germanic Tribes, and remains the best work of its kind in the field.



V.
Der 130te Psalm: Ans der tiefe rufe ich, Herr, zu dir.
(Das umgearbeitete Lied.)

Us tie - fer not schrei ich zu dir,
Dein guä - dig o - ren her zu mir

Herr Gott, er - höre mein ru - fen
und mei - ner bitt he - öf - fen

Denn so du wilt das sehen an,
was sünd und unrecht ist ge - tan,

Herr, für dir bleib ich ge - ban,
wee kann, Herr, für dir blei - ben.

Was tiefer not schrei ich zu dir,
Herr Gott, erhor mein rufen.
Dein gnädig oren her zu mir
und meiner bitt sie hören.

Denn so du wilt das sehen an,
was sünd und unrecht ist getan,
wer kann, Herr, für dir bleiben?

Bei dir gilt nichts denn guad und gunst,
die sünde zu vergeben.
Es ist doch unser tun um hinn
auch in dem besten leben.

Für dir niemand sich rümen kann,
des muß dich fürchten jedermann
und deiner guade leben.

Darum auf Gott will hoffen ich,
auf mein verdienst nicht bauen.
Auf in mein herz soll laßen sich
und seiner güte trauen,

Die mir zusage sein werthes wort,
das ist mein trost und treuer hort,
des will ich allzeit harren.

Und ob es wärt bis in die nacht
und wider an den morgen,
Doch soll mein herz an Gottes macht
verzweifeln nicht noch sorgen.

So tu Israel rechter art,
der aus dem geist erzeugt ward,
und seines Gottes erbarre.

Ob bei uns ist der sünden vil,
bei Gott ist vil mer gnaden.
Zein hand zu heissen hat kein zil,
wie groß auch sei der schaden.

Er ist allein der gute hirt,
der Israel erlösen wird
aus kinen sünden allen.

Among collections of German hymns, the best now in existence is that entitled Das Deutsche Kirchenlied von Martin Luther bis auf Nicolaus Herman und Ambrosius Blaurer, by Dr. K. G. P. Wackernagel. In addition to a most exhaustive collection of hymns, this book contains a valuable Preface.

Edward Dickinson, Professor of History of Music in the Conservatory, Oberlin College, has prepared the outstanding book in the field indicated by the title: Music in the History of the Western Church. His analysis of the subject, by countries, is keen and exhaustive.

Archibald W. Wilson, M.A., Mus.Doc., Organist of Manchester Cathedral, has contributed a monograph, the best of its kind, under the title, The Chorales: Their Origin and Influence, in which he combines an historical study of the Chorale with a critical study of the melodies.

Catherine Winkworth, in her Lyra Germanica, and her Christian Singers of Germany, has both made available to the English reader the best of German hymns, and also traced the course of the German sacred song, including examples of the best music of the respective periods.

Theodore Kübler, longtime Minister of the German Protestant Reformed Church, in Hooper Square, London, has made a large contribution to the work begun by Miss Winkworth, in his Historical Notes to the Lyra Germanica.

One more history of German sacred song deserves mention here: the Geschichte des Deutschen Kirchenliedes bis auf Luthers Zeit, by August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben. This is the best single work covering the period indicated by its title, being by the limitation of its field somewhat more intensive than the History (mentioned previously) by Dr. E. E. Koch.

Among the biographers of Luther, not many have been duly appreciative of the contribution which his movement made to the religious-musical life of Germany. The volume which is most adequate in this respect is the one entitled Luthers Leben by Julius Köstlin, which makes considerable mention of this phase of the personal contribution of Martin Luther.

None of these treatises gives specific emphasis to one basic contention of this Thesis, namely, that the Lutheran musical tradition, declining in the land of its origin, was transplanted to the Anglo-American religious scene; nor is there^{elsewhere} an attempt at a detailed analysis of the influence of the Chorale in the religious pattern of the English-speaking lands.

CHAPTER II
GERMAN RELIGIOUS MUSIC
IN THE PRE-REFORMATION PERIOD

The evangelization of the Germanic peoples was accompanied by the introduction into their worship of the Latin Liturgy and the Gregorian music. It is not surprising that this was accompanied by no small difficulty, for although the Germans and Gauls, according to John the Deacon, "applied themselves most diligently to the task of learning the new song," they never fully took the Latin language into their hearts. As a consequence, they were never without an impulse to express their religious sentiments and feelings in their own vernacular.¹ Among those most largely responsible for the conversion of the less accessible portions of central Europe were Saint Boniface the missionary, and Charlemagne the emperor-civilizer. In contrast with the earlier missionaries sent out by the Irish monasteries in the sixth century, and who placed less emphasis upon the Latinization of the new converts, St. Boniface agreed with Charlemagne that the introduction of the Latin Liturgy and the Gregorian music would afford some basis for the integration of the new society in the unity of the Church: the international

¹WILSON, A. W. The Chorales, p.32.

character of the Latin language was expected to prove to be a force in opposition to the tendency of the Germanic peoples to order their religious life in a manner which should be nationalistic in character.²

There can be little doubt that the Church did accomplish a great deal in the direction of identifying in the German mind the use of the Gregorian music with true worship. Nevertheless there inhered in this people a rich genius for the expression of religious feeling in lyrical form, and especially for part-singing, which was destined to make her contribution to the general musical treasury of Christendom a noteworthy one.

Prior to the evangelization of the Germans, they had a large store of lyrics directed toward their deities, and hence also a developed tendency to express their religious fervor lyrically. This tendency did not mature at once. Edward Dickinson informs us that

Down to the tenth century the only practice among the Germans that could be called a popular church song was the ejaculation of the words Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison. These phrases, which are among the most ancient in the Mass and the litanies, and which came originally from the Eastern Church, were sung or shouted by the German Christians on all possible occasions.³

² WINKWORTH, Catherine, Christian Singers of Germany, 6.

³ DICKINSON, Edward, Music in the History of the Western Church, p.229.

From this humble and somewhat inauspicious beginning, however, German religious music developed at a phenomenal rate. Several currents within the religious scene contributed to the great multiplication of sacred lyrics: there was a tendency to construct a semi-popular form of regular hymn, in which the Kyrie eleison appeared as a refrain at the end of each stanza; the intellectual quickening characteristic of the period of the Hohenstaufens resulted in the contributions made by the Minnesingers and the court poets; the chivalric trend found an expression in a volume of lyric-literature in praise of the Virgin Mary; heretics couched their peculiar dogmas in lyric form and circulated them among the lower classes, which forced a corresponding counter-program of song upon the part of orthodoxy; and the Mystics internalized^{tion} the spiritual lyric, and produced hymns expressive of their inward yearnings and raptures.⁴

Especially worthy of note is the contribution of the group of lyrical poets, called Minnesingers. These bards burst the conventional literary bonds of their era (for during the period of 900-1150 the literature was largely in Latin, the product of the clergy) and began to develop a new literary tradition, based upon the employment of the vernacular, and taking shape under secular

⁴ WINKWORTH, op. cit., p.34f.

hands. This new lyricism was of a surprisingly high order, marking a distinct advance in the level of German hymnody, so that the new productions

show a wonderful mastery over the language. Instead of the imperfect rhymes and halting metre of the previous age, we have long poems in intricate metre and crowded with rhymes, which occur often in the middle as well as at the end of each line. 5

These poems were set to music previously existing, or to adapted melodies; and in some cases new tunes were constructed to fit. This practice of adapting words to music paved the way for a significant trend of the fourteenth century -- that of setting religious poems to secular tunes, and of constructing religious paraphrases to current secular poems. Thus, the secular melody proved to be a source of supply for the musical setting for new religious poems, the importance of which shall appear later. 6

Another movement exerted a profound influence upon German spiritual song in the pre-Reformation period was that of the Mystery Plays. These were presented chiefly at the religious holidays of Christmas, Passiontide, and Easter. They were at the height of their popularity during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. From the compositions arranged for these Plays, songs of the Nativity, the Cradle, and the Virgin have most largely

⁵ WINKWORTH, op. cit., p.35.

⁶ DICKINSON, op. cit., p.232.

survived. The following is an example:

GElobet seystu, Jhesu Christ,
 das du Mensch geboren bist
 von einer Jungfrawen, das ist war,
 des frewet sich aller Engel schar.⁷
 Kyrie eleeson.

This same period was marked by a tendency toward vernacularizing the Latin hymns. This was accomplished in two ways: some of the great Latin hymns were directly translated into German; and mixed songs, partly in Latin, partly in German, were fairly common during the fourteenth century, and continued in more or less lofty form into the fifteenth century. Wackernagel includes the following as being in use in the latter century:

Mater et filia,
 o jungfrau Maria,
 hettest du uns nicht erworben
 celorum gaudia,
 so woer wir all vertorben
 per nostra crimina.
 quanta gratia!
 quanta gratia!

Ubi sunt gaudia?
 nirun wen alda,
 da die engel singen
 nova cantica
 mit iren sueszen stimmen
 in regis curia
 eia woer wir da!
 eia woer wir da! ⁸

Among the popular writers of both secular and sacred writers of this period, none is more worthy of note

⁷ WACKERNAGEL, K.C.P. Das Deutsche Kirchenlied, p.92.

⁸ Ibid., p.89.

than Walther von der Vogelweide, whom Catherine Winkworth considers to be the highest type among the Minnesingers.⁹ To be sure, much of his work was of a secular nature, and consequently of but indirect interest to the subject of this thesis. He has left behind, however, a considerable body of sacred poetry, out of which Wackernagel records seven selections, entitled as follows:¹⁰

1. Der Leich von der Heiligen Trinitaet
2. Morgengebet
3. Beichte und Gebet
4. An Maria
5. Das Leiden Christi
6. Kreuzlied
7. Gebet

Within the range of this one man's genius are to be found nature-lyrics, patriotic odes, political satires, protests against clerical and papal abuses, hymns of penitence, and outbursts of faith. These were the themes which engaged the musicians of his age; and from their treatment the religious musical tradition of the pre-Reformation era received both direct sacred lyrics, and melodies which lent themselves easily to adaptation to sacred purposes.

The fifteenth century thus inherited a rich musical

⁹Op. cit., p.46.

¹⁰Op. cit., p.61ff.

legacy from the centuries preceding. Sacred lyrics in the language of the people were growing both numerically and in currency. This condition could not have passed unnoticed by the Church. Whether she could read, in this growing trend, the handwriting on the wall, is not a matter which can be easily decided. Probably she did not foresee the full import of the German demand for a vernacularization of her services for worship. It appears that the Church encouraged the Mystery Plays as legitimate extra-liturgical exercises which tended to react favorably upon the general corporate religious life. The regular liturgical services were carefully guarded against vernacularization, save in cases where popular demand was strong in favor of the introduction of certain German songs of a liturgical character, each stanza of which was to end with the refrain "Alleluia" or "Kyrie-eleis".¹¹ From this it is evident that the Church was jealous to maintain those features which gave support to her international character, among which was the use of the Latin language in the liturgy of worship.

The period under consideration was thus still under Roman control; but the Church was discovering the necessity of making some concessions to popular demands and current trends, significant among which was the strong desire of the German people to voice their religious feelings in song in their own tongue.

¹¹ WILSON, op. cit., p.35.

In considering the musical development of the German people during the period prior to the time of Martin Luther, it must be borne in mind that apart from the more formal musical evolution, there was in progress among the populace at large a most significant informal process -- the growth of the Folk Song.

Of all the important musical countries, Germany was the latest to enter the international contest of Art. Though German accomplishments in literature, architecture, painting and sculpture, were very considerable at an early date, until 1200 music was of little importance. Credit for the rise and development of musical art up to this time belongs to France, England, and the Netherlands; the "ars nova" was practiced chiefly in Italy, France and Burgundy; and Germany's sole contributions of note were the melodies of the Minnesingers, to which reference has been previously made.

The earliest record now extant of German polyphonic music dates to about 1400, although a number of earlier sources must have perished. Of one such case, at least, there is surviving evidence. In the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871, upon the occasion of the bombardment of Strassburg, a precious musical manuscript was destroyed, which contained selections by a number of early German composers, whose names are not to be found elsewhere. But it is

possible that fortunate discoveries will help musical research to clear up the rather dark history of early German polyphonic music. It is a strange and remarkable fact that in a period of but approximately seventy-five years (1450-1525) German music should have risen to a rank equal to that of the music of the Netherlands, England, France, and Italy. This quick awakening from a long slumber, this rapid growth from a rather humble beginning, is one of the most astounding feats of the German musical genius. Its historical, cultural, and psychological basis has not yet been treated with the care that so singular and important an artistic event deserves.

Though German professional musicians contributed relatively little to the advancement of their art in the fourteenth century, the German people at large accomplished through their folk song something that retained great importance for the musical tradition of their land for centuries to come.

Folk song is not a product of professional art, the work of individual composers, like the songs of the minstrels and troubadours. No one knows where it originated; no records remain to tell with whom it began; but everywhere the people sang it, one person learning a song from another, words as well as music, since melody and poetry were inseparable. This characteristic and beautiful folk song, which

later became the basis for German art music, reveals the best and most lovable traits of the German people in a manner that, though primitive, is unsurpassable for emotional depth, youthful freshness, sturdiness, and melodic beauty. In his Deutsches Leben in Volkslied, a classic work, Rochus von Liliencron, one of the most cultivated of German scholars of the last century, has described German life in the fourteenth century, and has shown how it is reflected in folk songs. They are not highly refined esthetically, they do not show the hand of a scholarly poet; they are rather like wild flowers, growing in the fields and meadows, in the German forests, on high mountains, in valleys, and on the banks of rivers.

But it is not only nature and landscape that comes alive in them; the German people also appear in their daily labor as peasants, artisans, tradesmen, soldiers, knights, magistrates, and princes. All classes of German society, high and low, men and women, old and young, honest men and rascals, in cities and in villages: all have acting parts in these songs. For a hundred years: from about 1450 to 1550, German composers never tired of treating these popular tunes over and over again in their part-songs written in the contrapuntal manner.

The earliest document of the German polyphonic treatment of these folk songs which is known at present is the

Lochheimer Liederbuch. It is a manuscript containing about sixty compositions for several voices, by unknown composers. The date of its compilation is about 1440, but some of the songs in it must be older; on the whole it gives a survey of the average state of polyphonic writing in Germany from about 1300 to the year 1450. The purely artistic value of the single numbers differs very much, ranging from primitive and clumsy attempts, to highly finished workmanship and profound expressiveness.

This Liederbuch is one of the most precious documents of early German music. Like most of the song manuscripts of its kind, it was probably compiled and written by order of some wealthy and cultivated amateur. The manuscript itself has been for centuries one of the most precious possessions of the famous library of the Prince of Stolberg, Wernigerode, one of the magnates of Germany during the time of the Empire. This library, one of the oldest and largest private libraries in Europe, was sold at auction in 1933, and the Lochheim Liederbuch came into the possession of the Berlin State Library.

A few decades after the completion of this Liederbuch we find German part-song established as an art of high rank. It was this type of music -- folk song in a polyphonic setting -- along with Dutch motets and masses, that Martin Luther heard, first in his native town of Eisleben, later

in the larger city of Erfurt in Thuringia, where he spent several years as a young monk, and still later, on his journeys through the Germanic provinces. It was from these songs that Luther formed his ideas concerning the proper character of Protestant Church music.

The relation of the trend toward folk-music to the subject in hand is clear: the popularization of the sacred lyric in the language of the people was not chiefly the work of professional musicians, nor yet of the hierarchy of the Church who for the sake of policy were making concessions to popular demands. While the forms of public worship were still in the hands of the clergy, there was a strong undercurrent of restlessness in the religious life of Germany. This restlessness functioned in the direction of a popularization of the music of the Church. This in turn was paralleled by the growth of an indigenous body of music, which should gather together the best sentiments of the people, and give expression to its soul.

The foregoing considerations afford some measure of insight into the German religious-musical scene at the time of the appearance of Luther. The individualistic spirit of this people was preparing to assert itself. For several centuries there had been a groping after a pattern of religious lyricism which should afford an adequate avenue of expression to the maturing spiritual experience of a people

who were outgrowing many features of the pattern of the Roman Church. This groping had already afforded a significant beginning for the New Hymnody: it had furnished the raw materials out of which the Oak of Wittenberg should fashion a pattern of devotional lyric which should profoundly influence the development of the world's greatest musical tradition.

CHAPTER III

LUTHER'S REFORM OF THE WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH

In estimating the principles of Christian worship as they have been applied in the Lutheran Church, the thoroughly conservative character of the Lutheran Reformation must always be kept in mind. Luther did not break abruptly with the past. The movement which claims him as its chief representative was no iconoclastic effort to demolish venerable institutions as though the entire history and experience of the Church for the preceding fifteen centuries should be expunged.

The hand of God in the Reformation is not denied when we trace the course thereof in the true line of the historical development of principles inherent in the Church throughout her entire existence. The Lord was never untrue to His promise to be with His people to the end of time. Ever since the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit has been a living Power within them. Side by side the two-fold process may be traced, by which, on the one hand, the truth was corrupted; and on the other hand, by which it was continually brought to clearer apprehension and more adequate statement.

Had there been no Medieval Church there would have been no Protestant churches. Had there been no Scholastic

Theology, there would have been no theology of the Reformation. With Luther the break was a question of life or death. If the truth as revealed to him of justification by faith were valid, then the other teaching was necessarily false. If the former were to be accepted as bringing life, the other was to be rejected as soul-destroying. Without condemning predecessors who had not appreciated the extent of the antagonism, he who, in his heart-struggle after certainty of faith, had passed through the severest anguish could not be silent. Nevertheless, even in his protest and open conflict he was only the true and consistent son of the Church, who always maintained that his teaching was that of the true Catholic Church, and that it was his opponents who had broken with the past.

If in the ninety-ninth of the Theses of Sept. 4, 1517, dealing with the Scholastic Theology, he declares that "In these statements, we believe that we have said nothing that is not in harmony with the Catholic Church and the Church's Teachers,"¹ it is evident that he did not seek the role of an innovator. The Augsburg Confession repeats the same statement as the conviction of all the Churches that had followed Luther in the words: "Nothing has been received on our part against Scripture or the

¹ See the list of the "Theses" in WACE & BUCHHEIM, Primary Works of Luther, p.8ff.

Catholic Church." Hence the entire work of Luther and his associates was determined in the liturgical sphere, as in other departments, by constant regard to well-established usage, insofar as this usage was found not to conflict with the teaching and practice of the New Testament.

A. The Pattern of Worship Inherited by Luther.

With the public services of the Church of his day, Luther was thoroughly familiar. He knew them long before he knew his Bible. He learned to know scripture passages through them, long before he first opened a copy of the entire volume in the library at Erfurt. No one had been more diligent in the observance of the Canonical Hours -- the foundation for the matin and vesper services. From his boyhood as a chorister, he had sung their words until they became a part of his very life. As a most zealous and scholarly monk and priest, he was thoroughly at home in the Mass. His thorough philosophical teaching had accustomed him to a precision in the use of terms, by virtue of which the words offered him as the channels of his devotion became the subjects of constant criticism. He sought to say no more than he meant, and to mean every word that he said. The Book of Psalms, so constantly used in these services, was a favorite subject of study, in which, as his contemporaries, especially Matthaeus, tell us, he was

accustomed to weigh carefully and with protracted attention every word. His first lectures as a theological professor consisted in a verbal explanation of the Psalms, and throughout his succeeding career their fuller treatment was a favorite occupation, even then the din of controversy was raging all about him. The same intellectual habits and spiritual necessities impelled him to a close attention to other parts of the service. The Collects, the Antiphons, the Responsories, the Graduals, the Tracts, were not regarded as mere forms to be sung or repeated in a perfunctory manner, but as church rites, to be used only as they were the expression of Scriptural teaching adapted to the needs of the worshiping congregation or of the individual in his worship.

In this searching examination of the prescribed orders, his faith was refreshed by the preponderantly Augustinian character of the collects, and the fervor and unction of many of the metrical compositions that were found in Missals and Breviaries, and which were afterwards translated or made the foundation of some of his great hymns. At the same time he found the worship of Saints, especially the mariolatry, and the centralizing of the main service around the so-called sacrifice of the Mass, to be unspeakable abominations.

In the hope, however, that the protests made against

prevalent abuses would yet be heard, and a reformation of the worship, as well as of doctrine and church government, would be accomplished by the regularly-appointed authorities, Luther delayed considerably any attempt at change. He appreciated the difficulties before him, in the task of transforming the service from a mere spectacle which the people witnessed, to one in which as spiritual priests they could all participate; and in providing for the change from the use of Latin to the use of the language of the worshipers. Repeatedly did he express his dread of the extremes into which the people might be led, unless all changes were made with the greatest caution.

I have done nothing forcibly or arbitrarily, neither have I changed old things for new. There are two classes of persons, because of whom I have always hesitated and dreaded a change: first, the weak in faith, from whom a mode of worship, so long and well-established, cannot be suddenly removed, nor for whom can one so recent and unusual be suddenly introduced; and secondly, and especially, the trifling and fastidious spirits, who rush forward without faith and without intelligence, impelled solely by the love of novelty, and who are weary as soon as the novelty ceases. In other spheres, nothing is more troublesome than this class of men, but in holy things they are particularly offensive and intolerable. Nevertheless I am forced to bear with them, unless I want the Gospel to be entirely suppressed. 2

² Cf. SMITH, Life and Letters of Martin Luther,

p. 99 et seq.

The principles, however, of public worship according to which the Reformation was to proceed he outlined as early as 1520 in his "Sermon concerning the New Testament". It is an earnest plea for simplicity in all the external regulations of the worship, upon the ground "the less law, the better justice; the fewer commandments, the more good works." (It is necessary to keep always in mind the elaborate nature of the ritual of the Mass, to which he was objecting.) Luther felt that the chief factor in worship was the Word of God, that man's part was not to bring something to God, but to receive that which God bestows upon him or brings to him in worship.³

This involves the entire Lutheran conception of the doctrine of Grace. The basis for man's dealing with God is, not that man makes the first move; but that God, quite apart from any seeking or desire upon the part of man, first condescends to man and makes a promise. This promise comes through the avenue of the Scriptures, the Word of God; it is upon this Rock that all the works, words and thoughts of man are to be built. It is man's part to receive thankfully this Word, and to confidently believe its promises; and if he shall steadfastly believe that it shall be precisely as He has promised, God shall faithfully perform toward him according to the Word.

The 'word of promise' was considered by Luther to
 3. FEBVRE, L. Martin Luther: a Destiny, p.52f.

be embodied in the Lord's Supper, called "The New Testament in Christ's blood". Hence in order that the Lord's Supper be properly used, the words of which it is the seal must be kept in mind and laid to heart.⁴ Luther felt that the aim of the entire service was to awaken and confirm in every communicant faith in the redeeming work of Christ, and in its application to all who feel themselves to be sinners, as he had felt himself to be before his justification by faith.⁵

From this it appears that Luther had received as a heritage from Romanism a pattern of worship which was impressive in its details and artistic in its structure, but which was inextricably involved with conceptions which were alien to his new Evangelical vision, and which could only be of service to his new movement after a considerable revision. To accomplish that result, Luther required time for concentrated effort -- time which was not available before 1521, due to the fact that his engagements with the opponents of the Reformation occupied much of the time during the four years following the posting of the Theses.

B. Revision of the Liturgy.

It was Carlstadt's radicalism during Luther's ab-

⁴KÖSTLIN, Julius, Life of Luther, p.159.

⁵FISHER, G. P. The Reformation, p.90.

sence in the winter of 1521-22 that offered the occasion for the revision of the Liturgy, which could be delayed no longer. Early in the year 1523, Luther authorized the introduction of a revised Order into the Stadtkirche at Wittenberg, and almost contemporaneously a similar Order appeared at Leisnig in Saxony, whose pastors had obtained from Luther a memorandum "On the order of Divine Service in the Congregation". In this paper Luther asserts, first of all, that in the reformation of the Church, the provisions for public worship should be treated precisely in the same way as those for the preaching of the Word. As preaching should not be abolished because of the many defects and abuses in the sermons of preachers, but should be so reformed and regulated as to become an efficient means of applying the Gospel in its purity, and with the utmost simplicity, to the people; so the current Orders, both of Daily Morning and Evening services, and of the Sunday Chief Services, were only to be purged of their false teaching, and to be re-adjusted to the highest edifications of the worshipers.

Darauf, dass das Gotteswort in den Gemeinden lebendig und lauter getrieben werde, dass sie selbst damit vertraut werden, es sich aneignen und auf Grund desselben mit Gebet, Bitte und Danksagung zu Gott sich erheben, blieb das ganze Absehen Luthers bei den Anordnungen gerichtet, die er in Wittenberg vornahm und an andern Orten anzuregen wünschte. ⁶

⁶KÖSTLIN, J. Luthers Leben, p.320.

Luther took exception to three specific practices of the Roman Church, which appeared to him to be grave abuses. The first was the frequent disuse of the sermon, and the confining of the service to the reading and singing of its prescribed portions. The second was the introduction into that which is read, sung, and preached of much for which there is no foundation in the Word of God. The third was that of regarding the service as a meritorious work, by the performance of which man might hope to secure or enjoy more of God's favor.

The reform of the Liturgy was directed toward the correction of these abuses. Luther realized the magnitude of his task, and proceeded with a due sense of caution.

In diesem Sinn schritt er allmählich mit den Aenderungen im Gottesdienst weiter voran, die er, wie er sagt, nur zögernd und furchtsam begonnen hatte. "Dass," sagt er, "das Wort sollt im Schwung unter den Christen gehen, zeigt die ganze Schrift an und Christus selbst sagt Luk. 10: Eins ist von nöthen, nämlich dass Maria zu Christi Füßen sitze und höre sein Wort täglich; es ist ein ewig Wort, das andere muss alles zergehen, wie viel es auch der Martha zu schaffen giebt." Als die grosse Missbräuche des bisherigen Gottesdienstes bezeichnet er, dass man von diesem Wort geschwiegen, daneben unchristliche Fabeln und Lügen in die kirchlichen Vorlesungen, Gesänge und Predigten aufgenommen und solchen Gottesdienst wie ein Werk, das Gottes Gnade verdienen sollte, betrieben habe. Jetzt griff er durch mit der Ausscheidung jener Zuthaten. 7

⁷KÖSTLIN, J. Op. cit. p.320.

The conservative character of his early reforms in the field of worship is indicated by the fact that for boys in school and for all others who may be disposed, in the spirit of Christian freedom, to attend, he recommends the continuance of daily matins and vespers. From the Reformer's viewpoint, these services had their value in the fact that from beginning to end, in the Psalms, the Responses, the Antiphons, the Chants, and the Lessons, they consisted almost entirely of Scripture.

In the reformed service of Luther, the term 'Mass' continued to be employed, after the designation of the service of the ancient Church. The Augsburg Confession declares: "Falsely are our churches accused of abolishing the Mass; for the Mass is retained on our part and celebrated with the highest reverence."⁸

The Mass was the service held near mid-day on Sundays in connection with which provision was always made for the administration of the Lord's Supper, in which administration, insisted Luther, all emphasis must be placed upon the Word. At this time, as well as upon the occasion of the Sunday Vespers, the Word must be preached to the whole congregation. The Gospel for the day served as the basis for the sermon at the Mass, unless the preacher preferred to preach upon particular books of the Bible consecutively.

⁸
Augsburg Confession, Article 24.

These principles found an elaboration in Luther's Formula Missae. Here he declared that the Mass and the Communion were rites instituted by Christ himself. Both during His ministry, and afterwards under the ministry of the Apostles, they were observed with extreme simplicity. He contended that so many additions were later added that save for the name, scarcely anything of the primitive institution survived to his times.

After an historical examination of the various additions, he considered which parts of the Mass might be retained.⁹ The reading and chanting of the Psalms, the Kyrie, the Gospels and Epistles of the day, the Gloria in Excelsis, the Graduals, the Hallelujah, the Nicene Creed, the Sanctus, the Agnus Dei, are accepted as contributing to edification, provided they be not required as essentials -- that is, as commanded by Christ, but only as useful ecclesiastical forms. He insisted that if different men used different rites, the one ought not criticize nor despise the other. He was anxious that diversity of rites should not follow mere caprice, apart from careful consideration of the Word of God; and that from this diversity, there should not result a division into sects.

With characteristic severity he attacked the prevalent thought in the 'Canon of the Mass' which had perverted

⁹ See LIETZMANN, Liturgische Texte v. Martin Luthers Deutsche Messe, 1526.

the Lord's Supper into the offering of the body of Christ for the sins of the living and the dead. Luther's contention was that the central truth, which the Lord's Supper was intended to proclaim and seal, was thus utterly denied.¹⁰

C. Features of the Service Which Luther Criticized and Changed.

Luther criticized separately each element in the Service. Instead of the Introits, he preferred the chanting of the entire Psalms from which they had been taken. In the use of the Kyrie, he felt that the music should vary according to the season of the Church Year. The use of the Gloria in Excelsis was recommended, but was left to the discretion of the bishop. The Collects commended themselves to him because of their purely Scriptural character; but he directs that not more than one be used at a time. The selection of lessons from the Epistles he criticized for their preponderance of legal elements; he styled their compilers a "remarkably ignorant group of men" and hoped for an ultimate revision which should introduce selections from St. Paul's teachings upon the doctrine of faith. He disapproved the suppression of the Hallelujah at Lent,

¹⁰

MACKINNON, James Luther and the Reformation,
Volume II, p.254f.

and at other penitential seasons, considering this usage to be contrary to the joyful spirit of the Gospel. Even when under the Cross, he contended, the child of God should be ready to sing songs of triumphant thanksgiving, "Hallelujah enim vox perpetua est Ecclesiae."

In revising the Service, he gave much thought to the proper position of the sermon. Upon this subject he did not come altogether into the clear. It is not difficult to understand his dilemma. On the one hand, it was the deepest conviction of his soul that the exposition of the Word deserved the preferred place in the service; yet his cautious and conservative disposition reacted against making any too-drastic change. He suggested that it would be very appropriate to have the sermon introduce the service, and consequently, to directly precede the Introit. On the other hand, such a usage might prove too abrupt an entrance into the service to those who had been familiar with the Roman Order.¹¹

In the year 1524, Dr. John Bugenhagen, Luther's colleague and pastor at Wittenberg, embodied these principles in a pamphlet with the title: "Of the Evangelical Mass; what the Mass is, how and by whom, and wherefore it was instituted; also how it is to be heard and the Holy Sacrament received," and containing as its third part,

¹¹KÖSTLIN, J. Luthers Leben, p.319f.

"An Order for the Evangelical Mass, translated from the Latin." The succession of parts is retained as it stood in Luther's Formula; but after the Epistle a direction is given that a Psalm translated into German, or a German hymn concerning Christ, is to be sung. A formula for "Confession" and a "Declaration of Grace" before the service is also provided. The intention of Luther was, not that the new Orders should be regarded as law, but that their use should be left free.

The Strassburg Kirchan-Amt of the same year, prepared by Köpphel, also introduced a Confessional Prayer, to be used by the congregation while kneeling, to be followed by the recitation of the words "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." Following this came the Introit, Kyrie, Gloria in Excelsis, Salutation, and Collect as in the old Orders.

In 1526 Luther published another classical liturgical treatise -- his Deutsche Messe.¹² In this he urged especially the use of the vernacular in the public worship.¹³ God is to be addressed by the worshipers only in such language as they themselves understand. Luther felt that wherever a language was intelligible to the congregation, or even a portion of it, whether that language were German or Latin, its use was appropriate.

¹² LIETZMANN, Luthers Liturgische Texte, Bonn (1909)

¹³ Ibid., p.3.

Vnd wenn ichs vermöcht / vnd die Kriechische
 vnd Ebreische sprach were vns so gemeyn /
 als die latinische / vnd hette so viel seyner
 musica vnd gesangs / als die latinische hat /
 so solte man eynen sonntag vmb den andern /
 yn allen vieren sprachen / Deutsch / Latinisch
 Kriechisch / Ebreisch / messe halten /
 singen vnd lesen. Ich halte es gar nichts
 mit denen / die nur auff eyne sprache sich so
 gar geben / vnd alle andere verachten . . . 14

Luther's hymns, therefore, have their origin in his efforts to translate and popularize the church service. He sought to make the people actual participants in the worship, instead of mere spectators and listeners. Psalms, Canticles, Graduals, and even the Creed, that had heretofore been chanted by those trained for the purpose, were paraphrased into German verse, and set to familiar or easy tunes. Within the single year of 1524, most of Luther's hymns were written.¹⁵ Even the Ten Commandments appeared in verse, each stanza ending with the Kyrie. Instead of the Introit, a versified paraphrase of a Psalm in German was often sung. "Nun bitten wir den Heiligen Geist" was a popular adaptation of the Gradual, while the Nicene Creed appeared in "Wir glauben All an einen Gott". A paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer was the first form of the prayer after the Sermon.

¹⁴ LIETZMANN, Liturgische Texte V, Martin Luthers Deutsche Messe 1526, p.4.

¹⁵ WINKWORTH, C. Christian Singers of Germany, p.107f.

With the passing of time there came a similar reformation of the service in every principality of Germany that had accepted the Lutheran faith. The principles laid down by Luther in his Formula Missae and Deutsche Messe were consistently applied; and withal this was accomplished in harmony with the assertion of Christian freedom, by which diversities were accepted, according to circumstances of time and place. In general, Luther demonstrated his wisdom in this matter, both by leaving much to the decisions and preferences of localities, and by refusing to yield to the pleas of the "ritualists" that he should give large attention to the matter of organizing and administering the external affairs of the visible Church.¹⁶

The Lutheran Church developed peculiar capacities for adaptation to diverse gifts, diverse degrees of culture, and diverse preferences of men. Laying all stress upon unity in faith and confession, her genius lay in the ability to express this one faith in so many diverse forms of government and polity. The Lutheran Confession which is frequently regarded as the strictest of them all declares:

We believe, teach and confess that no Church should condemn another because one has less or more external ceremonies, not commanded by God, than the other, if otherwise there be agreement among them in doctrine and in all its articles, as well as in the right use of

¹⁶ FEBVRE, L. Martin Luther: A Destiny, p.247.

the Holy Sacraments.¹⁷

Lutheranism knows how to discriminate between what is desirable and what is essential. Uniformity in worship, if attainable, is often highly desirable; but there are greater questions at stake than that of mere external conformity to a given model. Between the years of 1523 and 1555, no less than one hundred and thirty-two Lutheran Orders were published. This does not, however, indicate general confusion. In the case of many of these Orders, there is complete identity, while others are substantial reprints. A very few became typical, so that by them the rest may be classified. Thus, the Orders have been grouped into three distinct types:

I. The Ultra-Conservative.

The Orders included within this classification were those in which the effort was the greatest to reproduce the medieval service, embracing only such an occasional change as seemed to be imperatively demanded for doctrinal reasons. Of this type, the Mark-Brandenburg Order of 1540, the Pfalz-Newburg Order of 1543, and the Austrian Order of 1571, were types. In the first of these the chants are sung in Latin: the prayers are made in German; the Gospel and Epistle are first chanted in Latin, and then read in German with the preface, "This is the

Epistle, beloved, which you have heard sung in Latin."¹⁸

In the Consecration both the bread and the cup are elevated 'cum modica inclinatione'. The words of Institution and the Lord's Prayer are sung in German, while following the Agnus Dei are three Collects, said in Latin for forgiveness of sins. The service ends with a German Collect, followed by one in Latin. The latter is subject to just criticism of transcending the Lutheran doctrine of the Real Presence, inasmuch as it employs language that, even though meant in a figurative sense, admits of the interpretation of a permanent union between the bread and the body of Christ, and of that Copernaitic eating thereof which the Lutheran Church afterward confessionally repudiated in the Formula of Concord:

Quod nos peccatores sumpsimus et calix quem
potavimus adhoereat visceribus nostris et
proesta ut ibi nulla remaneat peccati
macula, ubi tam pura et sancta intrevierunt ¹⁹
sacramenta.

The Pfalz-Neuburg order follows the Mark-Brandenburg in this inconsistency.

II. The Conservative Type.

The Orders classified as "Conservative" are those which follow the principles set forth by Luther in his liturgical treatises. The general structure of the Gre-

¹⁸ Mark-Brandenburg Order of 1540.

¹⁹ Formula of Concord, Chapter VIII.

gorian Order which underlies the Latin Mass was here retained, but with important changes and adaptations. Of these, the most influential was the Brandenburg-Nürnberg, prepared by Osiander and Brentiz in 1533, and revised by the Faculty at Wittenberg. Belonging to this same class were the Orders prepared by Bugenhagen for a number of states and cities in northern Germany: as Brunswick (1528), Hamburg (1529), Lübeck (1531), Pomerania (1535); the Hanover Order (1536) prepared by Regius; and the order prepared in 1536 for Duke Henry of Saxony by Justus Jonas, together with the Swedish and Danish Orders prepared by Bugenhagen.

Another most important order of this type was the one prepared by Melanchthon and Bucer in 1547 for Archbishop Hermann in his proposed Reformation of Cologne. It was based upon the Brandenburg-Nürnberg Order, and although never introduced, lives in the worship of the Church of England through the First Prayer Book of Edward VI, which drew largely upon it, and which is justly classified as one of the members of this group of Lutheran liturgies.

III. The Liturgies of Southwest Germany, the
Brandenburg-Nürnberg Order excepted.

This group of Orders, while Lutheran in doctrine,

showed the influence of the earlier efforts of Dr. John Brentz, the Würtemberg reformer, in the revision of the Service in which he had less regard for historical precedents than did Luther. These liturgies represented a compromise, a mediation between the Lutheran and the Reformed types. They assumed a fixed form in the Greater Würtemberg Order of 1553, which provided for two services, one for communion days, and the other for other occasions. On Communion Day the order is as follows:

1. Hymn to the Holy Spirit, a German Psalm, or any hymn suitable to the time.
2. Sermon, followed by General Prayer.
3. The Creed, in German.
4. Admonition concerning the Lord's Supper.
5. A brief Prayer.
6. Chanting of the Lord's Prayer.
7. Words of Institution.
8. Administration, a hymn (in German) being sung while communicants go to the altar.
9. Prayer of Thanksgiving.
10. Patriarchal Benediction.

Some elements are omitted in the enumeration, clearly because the pastors were assumed to understand that they were inseparable from elements that are mentioned: as for example, the reading of the Gospel before the Sermon. Here the

responsive features of the service have vanished, except that the Litany may be used for the General Prayer, or at special services on appointed days.

For the Sundays other than Communion Days the following Order was used:

1. A Latin Introit or a German Hymn.
2. The Sermon.
3. Reading of the General Prayer.
4. Psalm or Hymn.
5. Benediction.

It will be understood, of course, that this latter is but a minimal order, and that there was much left to the taste and inclinations of minister and people.

In all of these Orders, even in those of the first class, provision is made for a considerable degree of flexibility. There were express directions in the Rubrics, that in the country and village churches, a much simpler form might be employed, with the suggestion that only the organism of the worship be not destroyed. It was recognized that a more elaborate rendering of the service was desirable in the cities, where more musical resources were accessible. In thus seeking to adapt the principles of the service to the conditions of the people, while still preserving all its fundamental parts, Bugenhagen's Order

provides for no less than seven hymns, as the Introit, the Gloria in Excelsis, and the Agnus Dei assume a hymnal form.

D. Basic Principles Underlying the Lutheran Conception of the Service.

To appreciate the mutual relations of the several parts of the Lutheran service, the student of the art of worship must recognize the character of the Lutheran conception. To the Lutheran, all true worship is the communion of man with God, in response to an assurance of favor and a divine invitation encouraging such approach. Upon some word and promise of God, every prayer must rest. Two factors, therefore, mark all true worship: namely, the divine invitation, and the human response. God is ever graciously giving, and man is ever thankfully receiving. A clear statement of this distinction is made by Melancthon in the Apology for the Augsburg Confession:

The sacramental element is not limited to the Two Sacraments, but, in a general sense comprises every act in which God brings man a blessing; and thus belongs to the preaching and reading of the Word, as well as to Baptism and the Lord's Supper. A sacrifice, however, is any act whereby man brings something to God, in order to afford Him honor. Sacrifices are of two kinds. The propitiatory sacrifice, whereby God's wrath is appeased and His favor gained, is found only in the Sacrifice of Christ for us on the Cross. But eucharistic sacrifices of prayer, praise and thanksgiving are to be continual, offered by those who . . . are reconciled to God.

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¹⁹ JACOBS, Book of Concord, I. p.262.

An examination of the three main types of Christian worship reveals that three factors: the sacramental, the propitiatory-sacrificial, and the eucharistic-sacrificial, distinguish the three general forms of Christianity. Romanism, and to a less degree Greek Catholicism, obscures or denies the doctrine of the completeness of Christ's sacrifice on Calvary as the sole propitiation for sin. The worship centers, therefore, around the bloodless Sacrifice of Christ in the Mass for the sins of the living and the dead. By being converted into a sacrifice, the Lord's Supper loses its sacramental force. The assurance of forgiveness, of which it is the pledge, has vanished. God is no longer recognized as approaching His people with the words of pardon and comfort. Instead, the priest, in order to shelter the people from the divine wrath, offers the body of Christ to an angry, and as yet unappeased, God. Nor is the Holy Supper, according to this conception, a divine act; but Masses are multiplied, as works whereby man brings something to God.²⁰

The Reformed and Lutheran conception of the public service are alike based upon a combination of the thought of the eucharistic sacrifice with that of the sacrament. The proportion, however, is different; and there is a variation in the point of emphasis.²¹ The question involved

²⁰ MACKINNON, Luther and the Reformation, II, p.252.

²¹ LINDSAY, History of the Reformation, I, p.354ff.

is, whether the main end be the rendering to God of the sincere offering of grateful hearts; or whether it be the receiving of God's riches of forgiveness, renewing, enlightening, and strengthening grace.

According to this early Lutheran conception, the sacramental element was primary, not the prayers and chants, nor the hymns sung by the people, nor even the word of the pastor testifying from the depth of his Christian experience. The Word of God itself is the chief part of every service. To Luther the reading and repetition of the Word had sacramental force, for only through that Word comes the divine blessing.

The Lord's Supper was therefore considered to be no sacrifice that the worshiper offers, nor that any priest offers for him. Said Luther:

A Testament receives no benefit from us, but brings a benefit to us. Who ever heard of a man doing a good work by receiving a Testament? Man does nothing but take to himself the benefit that is offered. In the Lord's Supper, therefore, we give Christ nothing; but only receive from Him the blessing. 22

From this it is clear that Luther considered that the propitiatory offering of Christ was complete and final when He declared "It is finished", and that henceforth no man could appropriately give anything to God, but only receive of His grace, by virtue of the merits of His Son.

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LUTHER, Sermon Concerning the New Testament (1520)

In short, Luther's conception of the Service was that its entire value depended upon the reciprocal action of these two elements: God speaks, man responds. This was considered to be analogous to the principle by which the life of the body continues by the two-fold process of inhalation and expiration. God's Word has instructed; in the eucharistic sacrifice the heart turns to God and opens for the blessing; God responds with the word of divine grace, to which the heart at once opens to new emotions. The heart overflows with gratitude, with a sense of unworthiness of the blessings received, and with the desire for closer union with God and for a more worthy response to so gracious a benefaction. The expression of this constitutes another eucharistic act, to which God further responds in a new blessing.

The entire service was thus considered as a conversation between God and man, a continual giving and receiving. The pastor served, on one hand as representative of the people before God; and on the other hand, as representative of God to the people, in reading and proclaiming the word and administering the Sacrament. The people exercised their function of spiritual priesthood in their united hymns and prayers -- the eucharistic act -- and then again stand and speak in God's name, as in their responses they announce to one another the consolations and

admonitions of God's Word -- the sacramental act.

The principles of the Lutheran reform of the service were never completely put in practice. The ideal could not be realized within a single generation; and before the process was completed, a new period in the life of the Lutheran Church came, that of Scholastic Lutheranism, in which the service was burdened with labored attempts at precision of dogmatic statement. The freshness and warmth of sixteenth-century worship gradually ebbed away. The overwhelming preponderance of the purely didactic in sermon, prayers and hymns, hindered the free movement between the sacramental and the sacrificial elements.

A series of disasters further frustrated the development of the Lutheran worship: the Thirty Years' War, which greatly reduced the population of Germany and devastated most fully many regions where the Lutheran faith was most unequivocally confessed. Then came the Pietistic movement, which overshadowed the Common Prayer and united testimony of the Church by the individuality of the one who professed to lead the devotions. Later came Rationalism, which regarded sermon and service purely with respect to moral ends. It is understandable, therefore, that Lutheran worship during the period 1600-1850 presents a case of arrested development.

Justification of the inclusion of this lengthy analysis of Luther's reform of the worship in his new movement may be found : first, this thesis is offered in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the field of Religious Education; and second, that such an investigation is highly useful (if indeed not indispensable) to a proper understanding of the profound changes wrought by the Lutheran Reformation upon the patterns of both sacred and secular musical art in post-Reformation Germany.

CHAPTER IV

THE SPECIFICALLY MUSICAL ASPECT OF THE REFORM OF WORSHIP UNDER LUTHER

The foregoing general survey of the character of Luther's reform of worship affords a necessary background for the understanding of the principles underlying his great stress upon religious music, which impelled him to make his most significant contribution to the field of Hymnody.

It was exceedingly important to the Lutheran movement, that Martin Luther did not share that antipathy toward art which characterized the Puritans. The Church of which he was the founder has always advocated the use of sacred music, and has striven to provide for its members a musical pattern in their worship of the highest order. Luther summarized his attitude in this matter in the following words:

I am not at all of opinion that the Gospel should do away with art, as a few hyper-spiritual persons maintain; I would love to see all the arts, and especially music, in the service of Him who has given and created¹ them.

From the beginning, he employed the hymn, rather than confining himself to the Psalms. This does not mean that some of the hymns which he himself either composed,

¹CURWEN, J. S. Studies in Worship Music, p.125.

or whose use he authorized and encouraged, were not based upon the Psalter; as for example his "Ein' Feste Burg", which was obviously inspired by the forty-sixth Psalm. This fact served from the first to afford great freedom of expression to the writers of early German Protestant sacred music.

A. Luther's Personal Musical Background and Tastes.

It was doubtless providential that the instrument which God chose to precipitate the German Reformation was not only a lifelong lover of music, but also a man with a genuine gift for the production of music, and a rare faculty of musical discrimination. In his Tischreden he wrote of himself:

I always loved music; whoso has skill in this art is of a good temperament and fitted for all things. We must teach music in the schools: a schoolmaster ought to have skill in music, or I would not regard him; neither should we ordain young men as preachers unless they have been well exercised in music. ²

In his youth, Luther learned to play with proficiency several instruments: especially the flute and the lute.³ He was likewise a gifted singer, who loved to gather with a group of young men for part-singing. It is recorded that on his last evening before his entrance into monastic

² SCHWEITZER, J. S. Bach (tr. by E. Newman), I, p.29.

³ WILSON, The Chorales, p.21.

life, he invited a circle of friends to a farewell supper, after which the evening was spent "in music and good cheer".⁴ During the early years of his Reformation, and prior to his marriage, he wrote:

If people now take so much time teaching their children to play cards and dance, why should they not take an equal amount to teach them to read and learn other things while they are young, idle, and curious? For my part, if I had children they would have to learn not only the languages and history but also singing, music . . .

That Luther quickly saw the potential value of music in his new movement appeared in his statement that "The devil does not need all the good tunes for himself."⁶ His proposal was, that the folk-music which was being so largely devoted to revelry in the taverns, and which had so captured the fancy of the people, could become a potent factor in rallying the people about the standard of the Reformation.

His career as a loyal son of the Church (prior to 1517) gave him abundant opportunity to familiarize himself with the standard music of Catholicism. During this period he was able to observe the strength and weakness of this feature of the Roman worship, and to appreciate what was "universally true and edifying in the liturgy of the Mother Church. . ."⁷

⁴SMITH, Preserved Luther, p.9. ⁵Ibid,. p.187.

⁶WILSON, The Chorales, p.21

⁷DICKINSON, Mus. in Hist. of Western Church, p.243.

He thus brought to his work a thorough familiarity with the Gregorian tradition -- a familiarity which had afforded great opportunity for criticism and evaluation. This capacity was one of the two great elements in his background which peculiarly fitted him for his role as reformer of the music, as well as the doctrine, of the Church. The other element was his oneness in spirit with the German people, in their capacity to give expression to their religious feelings in fervent song.⁸

B. Early Stages of the Lutheran Musical Reformation.

Mit der Predigt von der Gerechtigkeit im Glauben an Christum, den alleinigen Mittler zwischen Gott und Menschen, ward ein neues Leben in den Herzen des ganzen Volkes geweckt und so auch für die Dichtung geistlicher und kirchlicher Lieder ein neuer Lebensbrunn⁹ gegraben.

To be sure, the quickening of interest in the composition and use of spiritual song was by no means novel with Luther's new movement. The fifteenth century was marked by a large growth in the popularity of this species of music, which, though still under the control of Roman doctrine and discipline, was indicative of a stirring¹⁰

⁸DICKINSON, Op. cit., p.228.

⁹KOCH, E.D. Geschichte des Kirchenlieds, I, p.231.

¹⁰DICKINSON, Op. cit., p.232.

within the temperament of the people, which should shortly afford a point of departure for a movement in which that people should be borne upon the wings of song to a new level of spiritual life.

It must not be thought that Luther was the founder of German hymnody. The purpose which he set out to accomplish was not that of creating a popular sacred music; he was outstanding rather for his work in making popular hymnody an integral part of the Liturgy. This phase of his work appears the more significant when seen in contrast to the Catholic attitude toward the church song. Professor Edward Dickinson has made a classic analysis of this attitude in his volume, Music in the History of the Western Church.

The attitude of the Catholic Church to congregational singing has often been discussed, and is at present the object of a great deal misconception. The fact of the matter is, that she ostensibly encourages the people to share in some of the subordinate Latin offices, but the very spirit of the liturgy and the development of musical practice have in course of time, with now and then an exception, reduced the congregation to silence. Before the invention of harmony all church music had more of the quality of popular music, and the priesthood encouraged the worshipers to join their voices in those parts of the service which were not confined by the rubrics to the ministers. But the Gregorian chant was never really adopted by the people, -- its practical difficulties, and especially the inflexible insistence upon the use of Latin in all the offices of worship, virtually confined it to the priests and a small body of trained singers. The

very conception and spirit of the liturgy, also, has by a law of historic development gradually excluded the people from active participation. Whatever may have been thought by the fathers of the liturgy, the eucharistic service has come to be simply the vehicle of a sacrifice offered by and through the priesthood for the people, not a tribute of praise and supplication emanating from the congregation itself. The attitude of the worshiper is one of obedient faith, both in the supernatural efficacy of the sacrifice and the mediating authority of the celebrant. The liturgy is inseparably bound up with the central act of consecration and oblation, and is conceived as itself possessing a divine sanction. The liturgy is not in any sense the creation of the people, but comes down to them from a higher source, the gradual production of men believed to have been inspired by the Holy Spirit, and is accepted by the laity as a divinely authorized means in the accomplishment of the supreme sacerdotal function. The sacrifice of the Mass is performed for the people, but not through the people, nor even necessarily in their presence. And so it has come to pass that, although the Catholic Church has never officially recognized the existence of the modern mixed choir, and does not in its rubrics authorize any manner of singing except the unison Gregorian chant, nevertheless, by reason of the expansion and specialization of musical art, and the increasing veneration of the liturgy as the very channel of descending sacramental grace, the people are reduced to a position of passive receptivity.

As regards the singing of hymns in the national languages the conditions are somewhat different. The laws of the Catholic Church forbid the vernacular in any part of the eucharistic service, but permit vernacular hymns in certain subordinate offices, as, for instance, Vespers. But even in these services the restrictions are more emphasized than the permissions. Here also the tacit recognition of a separation of function between the clergy and the laity still persists; there can never be a really sympathetic cooperation between the church language and the vernacular; there is a constant

attitude of suspicion on the part of the authorities, lest the people's hymn should afford a rift for the subtle intrusion of heretical or unchurchly ideas.

The whole spirit and implied theory of the Catholic Church is therefore unfavorable to popular hymnody. . . 11

Faced by this condition, Luther undertook the task not only of introducing popular hymnody into his new movement, but of working a radical transformation of the basic theory of worship. In the Roman Church, there existed, not merely an absence of hymnody in the liturgical pattern, but a type of worship-theory which could not be otherwise but essentially hostile to the employment of vernacular hymns. It fell to Luther's lot, therefore, to introduce a new concept of the place and the dignity of the hymn in the Liturgy.

This alteration was a derivative of the new conceptions of the relationship of worshiper to God; and the most striking manifestation of this new theory was in the field of congregational song.¹² The hymn received a new dignity under his hand. The natural impulses of the people were given a new outlet. The principles of the Reformation found a concrete expression in the very direction of the inclinations of the people. It was not remarkable, therefore, that the Romanists feared the new

¹¹DICKINSON, op. cit. p.240f.

¹²Ibid., p.242.

tendency -- that "Die Anhänger der alten Kirche sahen darum in dem deutschen Gesange ihren allergefährlichsten Feind."¹³

For

The congregational song both symbolized and realized the principle of direct access of the believer to the Father, and thus exemplified in itself alone the whole spirit of the worship of the new Church. That this act of worship should be in the native language of the nation was a matter of course, and hence the popular hymn, set to familiar and appropriate melody, became at once the characteristic, official, and liturgic expression of the emotion of the people in direct communion 14 with God.

That Luther realized the relation of the problem of musical reform to the totality of his movement of reform was evidenced by his early occupation with this aspect of church life. Projects aimed at popularizing sacred song claimed his attention immediately after his departure from the Wartburg in 1522. His "Formula Missae" contains an expression of dissatisfaction with the Roman Mass, and a wish that there might be available for employment in the reformed Mass "many German hymns".¹⁵ In 1524 he invited Johann Walther and Conrad Rupff to Wittenberg to assist him in the arrangement of a German Mass. The result of their labors was the "Deutsche Messe und Ordnung des Gottesdienstes zu Wittenberg Fürgenommen" which appeared

¹³FALLERSLEBEN, H. von Gesch. des Kirchenlieds, p.486.

¹⁴DICKINSON, op.cit., p.243.

¹⁵WILSON, The Chorales, p.20.

in 1526. This Formula made provision for the employment of German hymns at several points in the Service:

one at the beginning of the service instead of the Introit; at the Epistle "Nun bitten wir den heiligen Geist"; after the Gospel the German Credo "Wir glauben all' an einem Gott"; at the Administration the German Sanctus "Jesaja dem Propheten das geschah" or "Gott sei gelobet und gebenedeiet" or Huss's hymn "Jesus Christus unser Heiland," and the German Agnus Dei "Christe du Lamm Gottes." 16

It was not, however, his intention to discard the use of the Latin language, nor that the people should lose all appreciation for it. Says he:

Denn ich will in keinem Wege die lateinisch Sprach aus dem Gottesdienst lassen gar wegkommen, und wenn ich's vermochte und die griechische und ebräische Sprache wären so gemein, als die lateinische und hätte so viel feiner Musica und Gesangs: so sollte man einen Sonntag, um den andern in allen vier Sprachen, deutsch, lateinisch, griechisch und ebräisch Messe halten, singen und lesen. 17

The improvements which Luther introduced in these two liturgical editions (of 1522 and 1526) had a two-fold aim: the revision of the service in harmony with the principles of his definition of the Christian message; and the introduction of hymns in the language of the people. The Deutsche Messe of 1526 was the first to give prominence to congregational chorales in the service,

¹⁶ WILSON, The Chorales, p.20.

¹⁷ KOCH, Geschichte des Kirchenlieds, I, p.236.

although the "Gesangbüchlein" containing several hymns and hymn-tunes had appeared in 1524, two years earlier.

In a letter to Nicholas Hussmann, pastor at Zwickau, Luther lamented the fact that Germany lacked writers of "Christian and spiritual songs" who should combine musical excellence with spiritual insight. This lack was not long in being supplied. Luther himself became the leader of a number of hymnists, who, within a decade, had furnished to Lutheranism an immortal body of sacred music in the German tongue.¹⁶

Eduard Emil Koch considers that during his work of translating the Psalms, Luther received "the spirit of the psalmists and prophets." Early in 1524 he wrote to George Spalatin:

Ich bin Willens, nach dem Exempel der Propheten und alten Väter der Kirche, teutsche Psalmen für das Volk zu machen, das ist, geistliche Lieder, dass das Wort Gottes auch durch den Gesang unter den Leuten bleibe. 17

It is significant that Luther took the Psalms as guides in his hymn-writing. Not only did he find suggestions of content from the Hebrew Psalter; but also, he adopted the "tone" of the Psalms, making his hymns the vehicles for the expression of sincere and inward religious feeling.

¹⁶ DICKINSON, op. cit., p.249.

¹⁷ KOCH, E.E. Geschichte des Kirchenliedes, I, p.238.

C. The Lutheran Musical Reform Between the
Years, 1526-1546.

The Gesangbüchlein, with its eight hymns (four by Luther, three by Walther, and one of unknown authorship) was a humble forerunner of a great series of musical hymn-collections. Luther's zeal for the spiritual song was contagious among his co-workers. Other song writers both caught his spirit and followed his example. During the interval between its appearance and the death of Martin Luther, no less than sixty collections of German hymns were printed in connection with the Lutheran movement.¹⁸

Luther's personal contribution to this large production of hymns has been a matter of some controversy. Formerly, historians were inclined to overstate the quantity of tune-composition for which he was probably responsible, and to attribute too little of melodic composition to his loyal colleague, Walther.

Now, after fifty years of critical study of the chorale melodies, Luther's reputation as a composer rests on but a few hymn-tunes, one of them, however, of great excellence and another which is among the finest in all hymnody. Walther's reputation has necessarily increased . . .¹⁹

Philipp Schaff may overestimate the number of hymns which may properly be ascribed to the pen of Luther, for he says

¹⁸DICKINSON, op.cit., p.250.

¹⁹WILSON, The Chorales, p.26.

that

The Erfurt Enchiridion, of the same year (1524), numbered twenty-five hymns, of which eighteen were from Luther. 20

On the other hand, Dickinson feels that thirty-six hymns may be certainly attributed to Luther during his entire career,²¹ and it is improbable that half of these were composed by 1524.

The greatness of Luther as a reformer of the music in the Church does not, however, hinge solely upon the quantity of his own compositions, but rather in the impetus which he gave to others. Schaff lists the following illustrious names among those hymn writers were inspired by the work of Luther's hymnody: Justus Jonas, Paul Eber, Burkhard Waldis, Erasmus Alber, Lazarus Spengler, Hans Sachs, Veit Dietrich, Markgraf Albrecht of Brandenburg, Paul Speratus, J. Schneesing, J. Mathesius, Nicolaus Herman, Nicolaus Decius, and Michael Weisse.²²

Consideration of the works of these men, and of the specific nature of the hymnody of Luther and his associates, must be reserved for a later chapter. Concerning the period, 1526-1546, it must suffice here to notice the great quantity of hymns which were produced, and the general

²⁰SCHAFF, P. art. "German Hymnody", in Julian's Dictionary of Hymnology, p.414.

²¹Op. cit., p.250.

²²SCHAFF, P. op. cit., p.414.

unanimity of style among the writers. Koch lists no less than fifty-one writers of hymns during this period, from all parts of Germany. One characteristic, says he, marks the work of all of these men, and lends homogeneity to their work.

Diess sind die Liederdichter, welche sich in den deutschen Landen hin und her um Luther scharten. Ihre Lieder, in welchen das allgemeine evangelische Bekenntniss noch ohne alle Anwendung auf besondere Lebensverhältnisse ausgesprochen ist, haben sämmtlich den Grundcharakter der Objectivität mit einander gemein. Es sind -- mit Ausnahme der meisten Joachimsthaler-Lieder des Nic. Hermann -- ächte Kirchenlieder, in welchen sich, wie Stier sagt, "in grossen Grundzügen der kirchliche Glaube und das Leben ausspricht voll kräftigen Gefühls in der Gemeinschaft aller Glaubigen und doch ohne vereinzelte Empfindung des Persönlichen, wesswegen sie auch im höchsten Schwunge als aus dem Geist der Gemeinde geflossen sich bewähren." Daher ist auch stets "Wir" und nicht das "Ich" die Sprache, die in diesen Liedern vorherrscht, was übrigens auch von ihrem Zusammenhang mit den altlateinischen Kirchenliedern, die rein bloss für den Gottesdienst der Gemeinde bestimmt waren, herrühren mag. Die Dichter dieser Zeit schilderten noch nicht, wie die der spätern Zeiten, ihre eignen persönlichen (subjectiven) Gefühle mit allerlei Ausmalungen und figürlichen Ausdrücken, sondern durch die frisch errungene und wirklich selbst mit allen Anderen erfahrene und erlebte Wahrheit, dass das Heil allein in Christo sey, mächtig angeregt, besangen sie in rascher, von der augenblicklichen Empfindung bewegter Weise das für Alle gleich wichtige Werk der Erlösung und priesen vor Allem den Glauben an die freie, unverdiente Gnade Gottes in Christo Jesu, oder dankten für das neu-geschenkte, lautere Word Gottes in freudigem Siegesgefühl, und trotzten dabei gegen ihre Feinde in festem Gottvertrauen auf die Göttlichkeit der neuen und doch so alten Lehre.

Daher reden sie in ihren Liedern von den grossen Thaten Gottes zu der Menschen Heil und ihrer Aneignung Seitens der Menschen in dem freudenvollen Grundton: "Du bist mein und ich bin dein, uns soll der Feind nicht scheiden". Daher sprechen sie auch die Heilswahrheiten nicht in der Form des trocknen Lehrtons oder nüchterner Reflexion aus, sondern in Form eines Zeugnisses oder Bekenntnisses, und wenn auch schon in einigen dieser Lieder, wie z. B. in dem des Speratus: "Es ist das Heil uns" oder in dem des Spengler: "Durch Adams Fall" Lehrhaftes enthalten ist, so ist der Grund hievon einzig bloss in dem damaligen Hunger und Durst nach der reinen Lehre zu suchen. Daneben ist die Sprache dieser Dichter ganz die Bibelsprache und die Darstellung Kräftig und einfältig. In Wenigem haben sie die ganze Fülle ihrer Ueberzeugung kurz und körnig zusammengedrängt. Nicht die Kunst, sondern der Glaube geben diesen Liedern ihren unvergänglichen und unverwelklichen Werth als Kernlieder und Kleinodien der evangelischen Kirche. 23

Thus, by the time of the death of Luther, there had grown up what may be properly termed a "school" of Lutheran hymn-writers. Their productions are peculiarly characteristic of the Reformation. They echo the conflict out of which they were born;

. . . and in these songs, amid their protestations of confidence and joy, there may often be heard cries of alarm before powerful adversaries, appeals for help in material as well as spiritual exigencies, and sometimes also tones of wrath and defiance. 24

These words were set to melodies which suited their spirit,

²³ KOCH, E. E. Geschichte des Kirchenliedes, I, p.452f.

²⁴ DICKINSON, op. cit., p.257.

Darnach die Epistel im octavo Tono / das er im
 rnsföno oer Collecten gleich hoch bleybe / cuius regu
 le sunt iste.

Periodus est finis sententie.

Colon est membrum periodi.

Coma est incisio vel membrum Coli.

¶ Regule huius melodie.



Initium.

Coma.



Coma aliud.

Colon.

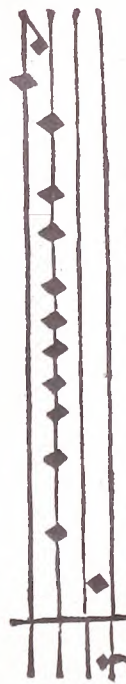


Periodus.

Questio.

Finale.

Exemplum.



So schreybt der heylig Apostel Paulus zu den



Comthern. Lieben brüder / da für halte vns



yderman / nemlich für Christus diener / vnd hauß



halter aber Gottes geheymnis. Nun sucht man



nicht mehr an den haußhalten / denn das sie trew



erfunden werden. Wir ist aber eyngeringe / das



ich von euch gerichtet werde / oder von eynem

and which served to fix them in the hearts of the people "by the magical tenacity of song".²⁵

D. The Musical Situation During the Century Following the Death of Martin Luther.

The popular religious song occupied an ever-increasing place in the lands influenced by the Lutheran Reformation during the years following 1546. Indeed, the Catholic Church shortly imitated the Protestants, and began to translate Latin hymns into German, and to adapt secular folk-songs to words of religious content. Professor Dickinson points out that "Protestants composed masses and motets for the Catholic churches, and Catholics arranged choral melodies for the Protestants."²⁶ This friendly arrangement of course terminated by 1618, at which time the nightmare of the Thirty Years' War overtook Europe.

Between 1546 and 1618, hymn books were multiplied, and a vast amount of musical material was made available for use in the revised worship of Protestantism. It does not appear that there was great emphasis upon further alteration of the Liturgy during this period, which was indicative of the fact that Luther's reform in the direction of vernacularizing the service, and especially the music, was proving adequate.

²⁵ WILSON, op. cit., p.28.

²⁶ Op. cit., p.264.

One point was definitely established: that in the Protestant Church, the sacred song was given a permanent status within the service. The congregation thus received irrevocably the right to give expression to its religious sentiments in its native tongue; and the level upon which this expression was to be made was to be determined by the calibre of the writers of its hymns.

During the stormy years, 1618 to 1648, when it seemed that the Reformation must take its place among the lost causes of men, the musical phase of Protestantism acquitted itself well. Although central Europe was devastated, and the dark passions of the human heart manifested themselves with a ferocity that was possible under scarcely any other impetus than that of religious fanaticism,

Religious poetry and music indeed survived, and here and there burned with a pure flame amid the darkness of an almost primitive barbarism. In times of deepest distress these two arts often afford the only outlet for grief, and the only testimony of hope amid national calamities. There were unconquerable spirits in Germany, notably among the hymnists, cantors, and organists, who maintained the sacred fire of religious art amid the moral devastations of the Thirty Years' War, whose miseries they felt only as a deepening of their faith in a power that overrules the wrath of man. 27

Thus, whatever features of the religious life of the Protestant movement might be crushed by the time of

²⁷ DICKINSON, op. cit., p.265.

disaster, the hymn proved itself to be one of the abiding factors of Reformed Christianity in the lands where the influence of Martin Luther set the standard of reform.

A final word should be said concerning the precise arrangement of the Deutsche Messe, as issued by Dr. Luther in 1526. This is available in pamphlet form, edited by D. Hans Lietzmann, printed by Marcus & Weber of Bonn; and in photostatic form published by Bärenreiter, Kassel.

The sections of the text are as follows:

1. Vorrhede Martini Luther
2. Von dem Gottis dienst
3. Des Sontags fur die leyen

The Order of Service includes the Collects, the Kyrie Eleison(s), instructions for notation of the chants, the "Das deudsch Sanctus", prescriptions for the readings from the Epistles and the Gospels, and directions concerning the arrangement of services for the special parts of the Church Year. A photostatic copy of the section "Regule huius melodie", indicating the musical arrangement, and the setting of the Epistle, is given in Figure II, page 62; this is reproduced from the edition by Bärenreiter (Kassel) (ed. of 1934).

CHAPTER V

THE CHORALES

The influence of the Protestant Reformation in Germany upon the music worship of the Church was most largely exerted through the instrumentality of that form of sacred music known as the Chorale. This musical type lent itself most favorably to adaptation by Luther and his associates in their reform of the worship of the Church, and at the same time proved itself capable of the highest degree of development and modification. It became therefore the ground and basis for the sublime forms, the Passions and the Cantatas, which were brought to their highest excellence under the hand of Johann Sebastian Bach. In addition, they were of such universal spiritual appeal that they found a ready reception, and in a sense, a second home, in the Protestantism of England and America, when the tradition which nurtured them in Germanic lands gave way to a more barren religious pattern.¹

A. Sources of Chorale Melodies.

The task of tracing the Chorale melodies to their original sources is in no sense an easy one, inasmuch as the earliest collections reveal little concerning their first

¹ DICKINSON, op. cit., p.318f.

beginnings. The sources are frequently obscure, while the melodies themselves have been so greatly modified in being adapted that they may reasonably be considered to be derived from one of two or more of the general types of source.

Dr. Archibald W. Wilson, organist of Manchester Cathedral, has made a four-fold classification of these melodies, according to their source.

We may classify the chorale melodies in four groups. First, there are the melodies that come from the German hymns of the Middle Ages. In the second group are the melodies derived from Latin hymns. Here we must distinguish between three main original types, namely, the plainsong melodies, the Sequence melodies and the melodies of the Latin hymns of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The third group consists of the melodies which were originally associated with secular texts. Lastly, there are the melodies which were expressly written for the Evangelical ² service.

Eduard Emil Koch classifies them according to the origins of their verbal content, which classification may serve to show the overlap between the derivation of the melodies and the derivation of the words of the hymns.

- A. Uebersetzungen und Ueberarbeitungen lateinischer Gesänge.
- B. Erweiterungen altdeutscher Uebersetzungen lateinischer Gesänge.
- C. Verbesserungen oder Ueberarbeitungen urdeutscher geistlicher Volkslieder.

²Op. cit., p.31.

D. Bearbeitungen lateinischer Psalmen.

E. Bearbeitungen einzelner Bibelstellen.

F. Frei gedichtete Lieder.

3

It appears from this that there was a parallel derivation of tunes and words: and that in the Middle Ages there had existed a genuinely Germanic melodic tradition, more independent of the Latin tradition of the Church than was the pattern of sacred words, which Koch traces to an earlier translation from the Latin into old German.

The German hymns of the Middle Ages represented the overflow of religious enthusiasm and fervor of the Gauls and Germans, who responded with avidity to the Roman introduction of the Liturgy and the Gregorian music. John the Deacon complains that these hardy converts to Christianity were "wont to mingle with it snatches of their own songs", songs which were of a ruggedness and virility which contrasted sharply with those of the Latin Church.⁴

The Kyrie-songs, based upon the plainsong of the "Kyrie-eleison", became Germanized under the impetus of the tendency of the people to break forth in song in their own tongue; and by the twelfth century, vernacular hymns had become common among the people. This tendency proved

³ KOCH, Geschichte des Kirchenliedes, I, p.240ff.

⁴ WILSON, op, cit., p.32.

too strong to be suppressed; consequently the Catholic Church attempted to give it direction. While not conceding to the popular trend to the extent of permitting vernacular hymns in the liturgical parts of her ministry, she encouraged the use of the Mystery Plays, and organized other religious ceremonies which, while not part of the liturgical program, nevertheless served to increase piety and to instruct the people in the narratives and precepts of the Sacred Scriptures.⁵

From the observances of this character, the German people developed hymns which were distinctly their own, and which were destined to contribute to the emancipation of their religious life. These centered most largely about the Life of Christ: His birth, His death, and His resurrection. Out of this body of humble and graphic music, the Chorale writers brought a wealth of both melodic and verbal material.

The melodies which the writers of the Chorales borrowed from the Latin Hymns were, in general, of three types: some were the derivatives of the old plainsong melodies; some were the derivatives of the popular Latin hymns of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, which became less and less dependent upon the Gregorian tradition. In between these two types were the Sequences, which in

⁵ WILSON, op. cit., p.34.

general were nearer in character to folk-song than to plainsong.

Under the touch, however, of the translators and melodic adapters, these differences in original character disappeared, and the Germanized hymns of Latin origin came to bear the characteristics of the native folk-music.⁶

It appears that at first, the translations were made with a view to familiarizing the people with the meaning of the Latin text; but they appealed to the singing public, and some of them gained considerable of currency. During the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries the translation of Latin hymns into German progressed more rapidly, so that before the time of Luther "there were already at hand German versions of most of the well-known Latin hymns."⁷

From the Sequences, which were vocalized musical phrases interpolated in the Gregorian music, came a number of chorales and chorale-melodies which were suited to adaptation in the sixteenth century.

Perhaps the most prominent are "Danksagen wir alle" and "Als der gütige Gott" -- the former a translation of the Sequence "Grates nunc omnes," the latter a translation of "Mittit ⁸ ad virginem."

⁶WILSON, op. cit. p.36f.

⁷Ibid., p.37.

⁸Ibid., p.38.

The later Latin hymns, with their tuneful character making them akin to the popular folk-song, were nearer to the hearts of the people than were those of earlier date; and hence afforded ready material for adaptation into the form of the Protestant chorale. In general, these later Latin hymns reflected a naïve type of religion, and were in the familiar "Ionian mode transposed to F", which musical mode was employed in the folk song; they therefore may be said to have bridged the gap between the Latin liturgical music and the popular vernacular Chorale.⁹

Secular melodies afforded one of the most fruitful sources of the Chorales. The common people of Germanic lands had for centuries possessed an abundant store of simple and cheerful songs, around which much of their social life was gathered. These they sang at work, at play, at festivals, and at home. They expressed the soul of the people, and constituted "a rich mine of simple and expressive melodies from which choral tunes might be fashioned."¹⁰

The fact that these melodies had previously been associated with secular, and sometimes bawdy, words was at times a source of embarrassment to the chorale-makers. In some cases, the older association between words and

⁹ WILSON, op. cit., p.39.

¹⁰ DICKINSON, op. cit., p.261.

melody dissolved under the new usage; but unfortunately this did not always occur, so that Luther upon occasion found it necessary to discard tunes because of their continued popularity at the taverns. Several folk-tunes, the most appealing of which was the one "Aus fremden Landen komm' ich her," disappeared from the chorale books for this reason; on the other hand, many tunes of like humble pedigree remained, "some of the most beautiful and devotional melodies in the whole treasury of sacred song."¹¹

The reason for this adoption of secular melodies was two-fold: in the first instance, the Protestant Church was in its infancy, faced with a crying need for music, and withal limited in musical resources; and secondly, in the employment of familiar melodies, sacred words were most readily introduced to the people. To be sure, some of the more rigid theologians objected to the practice; but time vindicated the method of Luther and his associates, for the secular associations of most of the melodies proved to be less long-lived than their new attachments.¹²

Wilson has amply justified the practice just discussed, in the following words:

We see how wide a use the Evangelical Church made of secular melodies. Some of these the Reformers borrowed from contemporary art; others are genuine folk-tunes. If we compare the general character of these melodies with

¹¹WILSON, op. cit., p.41.

¹²DICKINSON, op. cit., p.262.

that of the melodies of the old German folk-hymns, we notice certain points of difference. The secular melodies on the whole wear a more modern aspect. . . . The secular melodies show signs of emancipation from the old tonal system. In them the Ionian mode transposed to F (the key of F major) predominates, and, of the other modes, those that approximate to the minor key, namely, the Aeolian and Dorian, are by far the most common. Another distinguishing characteristic is their strongly marked and varied rhythm. The difference, however, between these two classes of melodies is far less than that which to-day marks the secular from the sacred type. During the early centuries of the art's development the Church was the only school of music, and thus even the secular tunes bear to some extent the mark of the cloister. There is a nobility about them even though, as is often the case, the words may be commonplace and frivolous. They seem to have a certain aloofness from their text, expressing, indeed, its general sentiment, whether of joy or sorrow, but raising this sentiment to a higher moral plane. And it is for this reason that they have proved so well fitted for the service of the church; that they have lived in the chorale books, as in their natural home. We cannot but feel that Hassler's beautiful melody has much more in common with Gerhardt's hymn of Divine love than with the little song of human love from which it was taken. And so it is with most of them; it is not until they have been set to a sacred text that they really come to their own and reveal their full beauty. 13

The number of melodies composed expressly for the Protestant Church has proved to be smaller than was once thought. This is especially true in the case of the early years of the Lutheran Reformation. Luther and his colleagues were busy men, and utilized materials at hand to

¹³ WILSON, op. cit., p.44.

conserve time and effort. The songs which they inherited had been proved by the test of time, and were already known to the people.

There were, however, some new hymns composed for the new Church during the first half of the sixteenth century. Wilson classifies as "new melodies" the following: "Ein' feste Burg" (1529), "Vom Himmel hoch" (1539), "Allein Gott in der Hoh' sei Ehr'" (1539), and "O Lamm Gottes unschuldig" (1542). Walther was, however, the leading composer of new melodies during this period.¹⁴

The period, 1550 to 1600, showed an augmented number of new hymns. The writers of this period were notable especially for one characteristic: they were men of both musical and poetic ability, and hence composed both tunes and words. Outstanding among these men were: Waldis, Hermann, von Burck, Selnecker, and Steurlein.¹⁵

The largest number of new hymns for the German Evangelical movement was produced during the first half of the seventeenth century. This period was one of strife and tragedy. Epidemics marked the earlier years, while thirty years of the fifty saw the combined destruction wrought by sword and microbe of the Thirty Years' War. The misery of the period laid bare the soul of the

¹⁴WILSON, op. cit., p.45.

¹⁵Ibid., p.46.

German people; and the poets and composers were drawn to put on paper what they saw there. Albert Schweitzer remarks that "Germany in its bitterest need created a religious poetry to which nothing in the world can compare, and before which even the splendour of the Psalter pales."¹⁶ Musicians, capturing the same spirit, responded with tunes to support and reinforce these spiritual poems. Among these composers, the greatest was Johann Crüger, of whose tunes about twenty live today. Other men whose works are today in current use are: Johann Schop, Rudolph Ahle, Vulpius, Gesius, Teschner, Neumark, Heinrich Albert, Melchior Franck, and Gastorius.¹⁷

B. Luther and the Chorales.

One of the remarkable features of the character of Martin Luther was his great versatility. In addition to his overwhelmingly heavy duties and responsibilities as apologist, theologian, and administrator, he found time to consider with great care the musical needs of his infant Church, and to both himself arrange music for it, and to inspire and guide his associates in doing so.

His revision of the worship centered basically in three innovations: first, in the employment of a "living language" in the spiritual offices; second, the elimination of prayers for the dead, all prayers to Mary, to the saints, the martyrs, and the angels; third, the reno-

¹⁶WILSON, op. cit., p.46. ¹⁷Ibid., loc. cit.

vation of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper along lines in harmony with the doctrine of consubstantiation. This revision was in no small part accomplished through the utilization of suitable music. The basic musical element in his reform was the Chorale.

The Chorale lent itself admirably to the new Service. Its simplicity made it suitable to congregational singing, which Luther incorporated as an integral part of Christian worship. This was one of his immortal accomplishments, one which has had profound reverberations in the worship of Protestantism in Great Britain and America. A number of chorale melodies, especially "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott," have been attributed to Luther himself. Even though actual evidence is lacking concerning the precise scope of his activity as a composer, he remains the originator of the idea. Likewise, he knew how to inspire artists of rank to write in a style adapted to the character of the Protestant Creed. And there is little doubt that the words of some thirty of the finest German Chorales were written by Luther. By virtue of these he takes his place at the head of all writers of German spiritual poetry.¹⁸

Since his intention was to make the common people to sing in the churches, he made the Chorales as plain and

¹⁸ DICKINSON, op. cit., p.250.

popular as possible. At the same time he knew how to give them a dignified spiritual character, with no trace of vulgarity or of cheap popularity. The most famous chorale attributed to him is "Ein' feste Burg," written in 1528, when pestilence, at that time a frequent and dreadful guest in Europe, was approaching once more. It is, to a certain extent, a poetic paraphrase of the Forty-sixth Psalm. But what a power of language -- what a strong and manly soul in these verses! What a consoling confidence in the help of God; what a courageous and militant spirit, against the evils of this world, penetrates this mighty Chorale!

Most of Luther's hymns were written in the years of 1523 and 1524. The melodies were new only in part; ¹⁹ a number of them were taken over from the Ambrosian hymns of the Catholic Church, from medieval Sequences inserted in the Gregorian chant, and from German hymns and popular songs. ²⁰ Luther did not simply copy these old melodies, but changed them, adapting them to their new purposes with eminent insight and skill. ²¹

In their simplicity and plastic clearness, in their powerful rhythm, their song-like character, and their melodic beauty, these German Protestant chorale melodies are essentially different from the Latin Gregorian chants. The

¹⁹DICKINSON, op. cit., p.250.

²⁰See pages 67ff, this thesis.

²¹WILSON, op. cit., p.23.

entire complex of German chorales was not, of course, created in Luther's time, but extends over a period of almost two hundred years. Nevertheless, Luther created its essential form, gave it its soul and character. Through four centuries these Protestant chorales have been the most precious material of German church music, having likewise been transplanted to England and to America, where their influence has been tremendous, as shall be noted later.

In addition to generalizing the participation in the worship, Luther emphasized the intellectual factor in the services of Protestantism. Worship had, under the dominance of the Roman pattern, become largely emotional, with a reliance upon the physical factors of the service for the creation of religious impression and for the production of religious expression. Luther felt that the worshiper must think, as well as feel and act; that he must receive truth, as well as give praise and thanksgiving; that he must grow in knowledge as well as in grace. Supplication had been multiplied, and instruction neglected. To correct these errors, Luther placed large dependence upon the Chorale as an instrument of instruction and of indoctrination. The value of the Chorale as a means of Religious Education shall occupy a later section of this Thesis; for the present, it is sufficient to point

out that Luther considered the Chorale (as it was developed by him and by his associates and successors) the ideal musical medium for his new movement.

His Chorales are surprising for their lack of the controversial element, so characteristic of other phases of his activity. In them Luther presented a loving Saviour Who longed to redeem His people; he presented a God, Who was strong to help and mighty to deliver. The fervent and militant spirit of these songs proved a mighty ally in rousing and maintaining the courage of the adherents of the new religion. The fact that they were couched in the homely phrases of their native tongue redoubled their mighty influence, while the fact that the melodies were adapted from previously-familiar songs gave them an added force to their message.

Apart from the Chorales which Luther arranged, and which he integrated into his Orders, his influence upon the entire movement of chorale-composition was great in that he inspired his contemporaries to develop the art of composition to a degree which would have been impossible to him, due to the multiplicity of his other duties.

C. Influence of the Chorales.

The strength of the Chorales lay in their simplicity, and in their vast possibilities for development and elabora-

tion. They lacked the finality of the plainsong, being rather an elementary expression of the musical genius of a people who were at the threshold of new opportunity for the development of that genius.

Dr. Archibald W. Wilson has indicated that the chief influence of the Chorales has been exerted in a two-fold manner: first, they were a great moral and inspirational force; and second, that they furnished the basic materials for a technical development of musical art, which was largely contributive to the remarkable progress of musical development in Germany, and particularly in the seventeenth century.²²

The Chorales were the vehicles by which the religious fervor of the day of Luther was conserved for the generations which followed. They at the same time served to reflect the national ideals, and to shape and to conserve them. German art was, during this period, essentially religious art; and the music of the Evangelical Church enlisted the genius of many great and talented men -- men motivated by religious sentiment and fervor.

The productions of these men, in turn, kept the fires of the German Reformation alive. The development of this movement was largely along musical lines after 1555. By the time of the Peace of Augsburg, the orthodox Evan-

²² WILSON, op. cit., p.4.

gelical theology was practically fixed. The probable direction of elaboration and development within Lutheranism was that of the worship of the Church. The verbal parts of the Liturgy were likewise rather fully developed, since back of them lay the long line of Roman liturgical usage, with which Lutheranism had not made a definite break, but which it rather sought to purify.

In the field of musical worship, however, the case was different. The Reformation brought a definite alteration of the theory of music in the Liturgy. At the same time, there was a stirring of interest in the Arts, which brought with it a sense of the vast possibilities for development within the musical field. It was doubtless fortunate that the Lutheran Church included within her ranks so large a number of men of musical talent. The genius of these men contributed largely to the conservation of Lutheranism, and to its projection into the generations which followed that of its founding. This conserving influence maintained the spirit and fervor of the Church through the unsteady years preceding 1618, and brought to the period of the Thirty Years' War a Faith which was practically the sole bulwark against despair during the nightmare of these years.²³

The influence of the Chorales upon the development

²³

DICKINSON, op. cit., p.265.

of musical technique in Germany has only recently been fully realized and appreciated. The status of this Art in Germany during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was none too secure. The large incursion of the Genevan Reformation into southern and western Germany threatened to circumscribe the religious musical tradition, by confining the worship-music to the singing of the Hebrew Psalms. Likewise, there was a school of musicians which desired to make the Italian dramatic forms the sole basis of the composition of religious music.²⁴ This latter tendency would have served to subjectivize and individualize the hymn, and thus destroy the essential feature of the Chorale-type.

The popular religious enthusiasm served to turn the men of greatest musical genius toward the service of the Church. With the Chorale as a norm, these men began the course of German musical development which was little short of phenomenal in its progress.²⁵

Dr. Wilson traces a two-fold influence of the Chorale upon the development of musical technique during the seventeenth century. In 1586, Osiander of Wurtemberg published a hymn-collection entitled: "Fifty Spiritual Songs for our voices, set in such a way that the whole

²⁴DICKINSON, op. cit., p.269.

²⁵WILSON, op. cit., p.4.

Christian congregation can join in them." The purpose of this hymnal was to unite the singing of choir and of congregation. Formerly the books designed for the use of the people, the enchiridions, contained only words and single melody; while those furnished the choirs contained "the melody, placed in the tenor part . . . set contrapuntally for three, four, or five voices."²⁶ The book by Osiander placed the melody in the soprano part, and supported it, note by note. This was the beginning of harmonic style in Church hymnals, inspired by the practice of Chorale singing. It was the Chorale which furnished both the opportunity and the incentive for the development of this form. The bulk of the hymnals which appeared in the seventeenth century followed this example of Osiander, being designed to unite the singing of congregation and choir by means of homophony.²⁷

In addition to the harmonization of Chorales, the German composers of the seventeenth century developed polyphonic music to a degree hitherto unknown. To this development the world is indebted beyond measure to the German Protestant organ-composers. The composition of the choralvorspiele enlisted the abilities of some of the greatest of Germany's musical geniuses. Foremost among

²⁶ WILSON, op. cit., p.4.

²⁷ Ibid., p.5.

the earlier of these were: Swelinck, Scheidt, Buxtehude, Froberger, and Pachelbel.²⁸ Characteristic of the instrumental polyphony of these men was its gravity and disciplined intelligence. As a musical form, it became an integral part of the Protestantism of the period; indeed, it overflowed into Holland, where it exerted a significant influence in the worship-pattern there.²⁹

This musical form was particularly attractive and congenial to Johann Sebastian Bach. "In his hands it assumes a new significance, for he treats at the same time both tune and words of the hymn."³⁰ The basis for the work of this composer, who as an organ player and composer stands at the summit of human achievement, was the Chorale, which served as the canti fermi of his development of instrumental polyphony. With this as his point of departure, he composed his fugues, preludes, fantasies, sonatas, toccatas and variations; and these productions in turn greatly enriched the field of the Chorale.

The influence of the Chorale in the rise and development of the Passion and the Cantata was likewise greater than has been sometimes assumed. It was at the same time the most suitable basis for elaboration into

²⁸DICKINSON, op. cit., p.292.

²⁹Ibid., p.291.

³⁰WILSON, op. cit., p.6.

these sublime forms, and also the form which most truly preserved the spirit of the Reformation and the high traditions of its liturgic song.

Thus, the Chorale served as both the basis and the inspiration for the culmination of Germany's sacred-musical tradition. In its rugged simplicity, it offered almost limitless possibilities for elaboration and development -- possibilities which were seized upon by a series of great artists, whose efforts were not desultory, but cumulative, reaching a synthesis and peak of achievement in the wide activities of Johann Sebastian Bach, "one of the monumental figures in the religious history of Germany, undoubtedly the most considerable in the two centuries following the death of Luther."³¹

D. The Chorales as a Medium of Religious Education.

It has been said that while the Calvinian Reformation was preached into the heads of its adherents, the Lutheran Reformation sang its way into the hearts of the people. A fit motto for the history of the Reformation in Germany might have been those words from the record of the Day of Pentecost: "How hear we, every man in our own tongue wherein we were born . . . the wonderful works of

³¹
DICKINSON, op. cit., p.284.

God?" It has been long recognized that Martin Luther operated upon the cardinal principle that a people who should be religiously free must have access to the Sacred Scriptures in their own tongue. The two great works, then, of this Reformer were those by which he gave to the common people a vernacular Bible and vernacular worship. And few will deny that the inclusion of popular singing of Chorales in the language of the people was the largest single contributory factor to the production of a truly vernacular worship.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge is quoted as having spoken as follows:

Luther did as much for the Reformation by his hymns as by his translation of the Bible. In Germany the hymns are known by heart by every peasant; they advise, they argue from the hymns, and every soul in the church praises God like a Christian, with words which are natural and yet sacred³² to his mind.

Michelet, in his Life of Luther, quotes the following:

Not less remarkable, not less significant than his prose works are Luther's poems, those stirring songs, which, as it were, escaped from him in the very midst of his combats and his necessities like a flower making its way from between rough stones, or a moonbeam gleaming amid dark clouds. Luther loved music; indeed, he wrote the most capable treatises on the art. Accordingly his versification is highly harmonious, so that he may be called the Swan of Eisleben. Not that he was by any means

³² SMITH, P. Martin Luther, p.123. BACON & ALLEN, Hymns of Martin Luther, p.xiv.

gentle or swan-like in the songs which he composed for the purpose of exciting the courage of the people. In these he is fervent, 33
fierce.

From this it appears that Luther depended largely upon the instrumentality of the sacred song to transmit the spirit in which he struggled for truth, to his followers.

But it was not only the spirit of the Reformation which was to be spread like a contagion. Luther was wise enough to realize that enthusiasm without knowledge would defeat its own purpose. And the diffusion of theological knowledge was no small task in the early sixteenth century. The common man was very largely occupied with the stern task of securing a livelihood; indeed, the poverty forced by high taxation, plus frequent imposition of extra duties by the nobility, shortly forced the Peasants' Revolt. Under such conditions, facilities for education were limited, and time for extensive study was not available to the majority of men.

But Luther recognized one great ally in his task of indoctrination: the people loved to sing! And Luther had a perfectly clear conception of the kind of music he needed for the new church. He wished to reach the common people; and for that purpose neither Latin language nor Gregorian chant were suitable. To achieve his end

³³ HEINE, "Revue des Deux Mondes", article under date of March, 1834. In: MICHELET, Life of Luther.

he chose in place of the noble but complex melodic structure of the Gregorian chant, something much simpler and less pretentious, the Chorale.

Luther's first task was to convince his own adherents that their faith was founded on solid ground; This he felt to be a first necessity, to take precedence over the spread of his message to new fields. Germany was thrilled by the new message, in word and in song. Luther's hymns are credited with the conversion of more people than all his sermons and other writing combined. The Chorales were continually heard: sung by the baker before his oven, the cobbler at his bench, the farmer in his field, the child at play. They permeated German religious, communal, and domestic life.

The content of these spiritual poems was simple and direct. Although Luther was a man of great erudition, his hymns contain no theological subtleties. His total aim was to present to the hearts of those who sang the basic ground-truths of the Reformation. They emphasized the principle that salvation cannot come through any human mediation, but only through faith in Christ, and in the thorough-going renovation of the inmost nature. They inspired confidence in the mighty ability of God to make men "more than conquerors", they reminded man of his complete dependence upon God, and upon the atoning death of

Jesus Christ, for salvation.

In his First Preface, Luther himself says:

. . . I have myself, with some others, put together a few hymns, in order to bring into full play the blessed Gospel, which by God's grace hath again risen: that we may boast, as Moses doth in his song (Exodus xv) that Christ is become our praise and our song, and that, whether we sing or speak, we may not know anything save Christ our Saviour, ³⁴ as St. Paul saith (i Cor. ii.).

From this it is clear that Luther considered his Chorales to have a didactic purpose. This purpose they fulfilled admirably.

Many a heart, unable to understand the reaches of Melanchthon's theology, found rich comfort in the songs from Luther's soul. Year after year as he grew older he could hear with the ear of the spirit his German people marching to victory to the heroic rhythm of his music. Between the cradle songs of Jesus and the strong fortress of God his religious ³⁵ life found clear expression.

The wisdom of Luther's emphasis upon the spiritual song as an instrument and medium of religious education is clearly evident. By this means, he could transpose the deep truths of his theology into the familiar key of the vernacular song. He found a people whose love of music opened its heart. He found a type of sacred song which should lend itself to the transmission of the rugged truths of his theology, and which made its primary appeal

³⁴ BACON & ALLEN, Hymns of M. Luther, p.xxi.

³⁵ BOOTH, Martin Luther, Oak of Saxony, p.233.

to the cognitive faculties (in contrast to the Gregorian music, the appeal of which was largely to the sensibilities); for Luther desired that his followers should primarily know wherein their faith reposed, rather than only feel a response to the esthetic appeal of the Gospel.

The Reformer recognized also that the German people was inherently a singing people. For centuries they had been giving voice to their feelings in song -- song which frequently took the form of dancing-house ballad and tavern ditty. Fully aware of this, Luther wrote:

These songs have been set in four parts, for no other reason than because I wished to provide our young people (who both will and ought to be instructed in music and other sciences) with something whereby they might rid themselves of amorous and carnal songs, and in their stead learn something wholesome, and so apply themselves to what is good with pleasure, as becometh the young.

36

Here was an application of the "expulsive power of a new affection" par excellence . Implemented by this strong love for music upon the part of the people, it is small wonder that the Evangelical Church's message captivated the heart of so much of Germany within a century.

The magnitude of the genius of Luther was revealed by the promptness with which he seized upon every avenue of approach to the temperament of his people, and by the manner in which he was able to enlist his colleagues in the

³⁶ BACON & ALLEN, The Hymns of Martin Luther, p.xxi.

service of propagating his message. And long before the science of Religious Education took formal shape, he had grasped its essential principles, and pressed them into the duty of winging the Evangelical message across the Germanic lands, and shortly into lands beyond.

Die neuen Lieder flogen hinaus in Stadt und Land, in Kirchen und Häuser. Oft mehr, als Predigten es vermochten, brachten sie das Wort der evangelischen Wahrheit in die Ohren und Herzen. Sie sind zu Waffen des Kampfes wie zu Mitteln der Erbauung und des Trostes geworden. 37

³⁷ KÖSTLIN, Luthers Leben, p. 323.

CHAPTER VI

EARLY LUTHERAN CHORALE BOOKS

So erschien nun zu Wittenberg im Anfang des Jahrs 1524 ein erstes deutsches Gesangbüchlein, nur erst aus acht Liedern bestehend, zur Hälfte aus Liedern Luthers, nämlich dem Lied: "Nun freut euch" und drei Psalmliedern.¹

From this humble beginning, the production of German Chorale books grew apace with the spread of the Lutheran reform. The year 1524 saw the publication of three books of hymns, the Etlich Cristlich Lieder, the Erfurt Enchiridion, and the Gesangbüchlein.

The first of these, also known as the Achtliederbuch, contained eight hymns and four melodies. It was compiled by Luther's friend, Johann Walther, and contained four hymns by Luther, three by Paul Speratus, and one whose authorship is unknown. Titles of the eight hymns are as follows:

1. Nun freut euch, lieben Christen g'mein.
2. Ach Gott, vom Himmel sieh' darein.
3. Es spricht der Unweisen Mund wohl.
4. Aus tiefer Noth schrei' ich zu dir.
5. Es ist das Hayl uns kummen her.
6. In Got gelaub ich, das er hat.
7. Hilff Got, wie ist der menschen not.
8. Ich ruff zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ.

¹KÖSTLIN, Luthers Leben, p.322.

The Erfurt Enchiridion was a somewhat larger collection, containing twenty-six hymns and ten chorale melodies. Phillip Schaff attributes eighteen of these hymns to Luther,² while Bacon and Allen list the following fourteen as probably his compositions:³

1. Ein neues Lied wir heben an.
2. Nun komm' der Heiden Heiland.
3. Christum wir sollen loben schon.
4. Gelobet sei'st du, Jesu Christ.
5. Christ lag in Todesbanden.
6. Komm', Gott Schöpfer, heiliger Geist.
7. Jesus Christus unser Heiland, der den Tod.
8. Komm', heiliger Geist, Herre Gott.
9. Diesz sind die heil'gen Zehn Gebot'.
10. Jesus Christus, unser Heiland, der von uns.
11. Gott sei gelobet und gebenedeiet.
12. Es wollt' uns Gott genädig sein.
13. Wohl dem, der in Gottesfurcht steht.
14. Mitten wir im Leben sind.

The Enchiridion was designed to serve as "A little hand-book useful for a Christian at the present time for the practice of sacred songs."⁴

²SCHAFF, op. cit., Julian's Dictionary, p.414.

³BACON & ALLEN, Hymns of M. Luther, p. viif.

⁴WILSON, op. cit., p.8.

Of this song-book, two editions appeared simultaneously, one printed by Trutebul at his press "Zum Ferbefass", the other by Maler at his "Zum Scharzen Horn"; the chief differences between the two editions were those of arrangement.

Walther's Gesangbüchlein differed from the two foregoing in that, while they contained only melodies, it carried a polyphonic arrangement, designed for the use of a trained choir in three, four, and five parts. Only the separate voice parts were printed, the appearance of chorale books with polyphonic parts set in score being a later development.⁵

There has been difference of opinion concerning the relative order of compilation of the Enchiridion and the Gesangbüchlein. Light upon this matter is afforded by a consideration of their respective characteristics. The former is intended for popular use; the latter contains the same hymns of Luther, adding six more:

1. Nun bitten wir den heiligen Geist.
2. Mit Fried' und Freud' ich fahr' dahin.
3. Mensch, willst du leben seliglich.
4. Gott der Vater wohn' uns bei.
5. Wir glauben all' an einen Gott.
6. War' Gott nicht mit uns diese Zeit.⁶

⁵WILSON, op. cit., p.8.

⁶BACON & ALLEN, op. cit., p.ix.

But the purpose of the Gesangbüchlein was to afford music for the choir. Therefore, there is reason to believe that the production of the two was practically simultaneous. As soon as Luther and his associates had produced their texts, Walther began to plan two books: one contained the melodies of the simpler of the available hymns, suitable for popular use; the other contained, in addition, some more intricate chorales, -- all arranged for trained singers. If the latter appeared during a later month than that of the publication of the former, it was doubtless due to the added mechanical work requisite to the production of the polyphonic edition. It contained also Luther's "First Preface", which would have been equally fitting for the Enchiridion. This suggests that the Gesangbüchlein may have gone to press at a slightly later date.⁷

These three hymnals were received with great popular enthusiasm. They, and especially the Enchiridion, went through numerous editions. Likewise they served to create a popular demand; and during the following four or five years a number of inaccurate collections, based upon them, made an appearance.⁸ In view of this, Luther

⁷ BACON & ALLEN, op. cit., p.xxi.

⁸ WILSON, op. cit., p.9.

felt inclined to produce a normative hymnal, in unison-style for popular use, entitled Geistliche Lieder auff new gebessert, which appeared in 1529. In the preface of this work, Luther included the following words: "Because I see that the more often our first hymns are printed, the more inaccurate they become, I beg and admonish all no more to improve upon and augment our little book."⁹ This book has not survived, save for preface and a few pages, but its contents have been reproduced from superscriptions in later hymn-books.

Dr. Wilson considers that this work of Luther formed the basis for the chief chorale-books which subsequently appeared till the end of the century. Outstanding among these were: Klug's Gesangbuch (1529), not now in existence; an edition by A. Rauscher of Erfurt (1531); Klug's Gesangbuch, editions of 1535 and 1543; Schumann's edition of 1539; and Babst's Gesangbuch (1545).¹⁰ This last-named work was the last to be published under the personal direction of Martin Luther. It contained his "Third Preface"¹¹ or, according to Bacon and Allen, his "Fourth Preface".¹² Babst's edition was a two-part hymnal,

⁹WILSON, op. cit., p.9.

¹⁰Ibid., p.10.

¹¹Loc. cit.,

¹²Op. cit., p.xxvi.

containing a hundred and twenty-nine Chorales, and ninety-seven chorale-melodies. It appeared in a series of editions, and was the standard Lutheran hymnal for over fifty years.¹³

A number of Luther's hymns likewise appeared in the hymnals of the Reformed Churches of southern Germany. Their use in this branch of the Church centered in the city of Strassburg. Outstanding among the productions of this region embodying Lutheran hymns was the "Deutsch Kirchanamt . . . wie es die Gemeinde zu Strassburg singt."

One more significant development of early Lutheran hymnody deserves consideration here. Lucas Osiander, who was Court Preacher at Wurtemberg, published in 1586 his Fifty Spiritual Songs, which was a four-part arrangement, designed to simplify part-singing for the layman, and to provide him with a melody in the soprano part, with a harmonization sufficiently usable that he could join with the choir. This work marked a significant trend toward homophony which was characteristic of the period, and served as the basis for the numerous later collections of Chorales, made by such men as Calvisius, Eccard, Hassler, Gesius, Vulpius, and Prætorius.¹⁴

¹³ WILSON, op. cit., p.10.

¹⁴ Ibid., p.11.

In this connection, something should be said concerning the structural form of the Chorale as it appeared in these early collections. For as they are now sung in our churches, they stand greatly modified in harmony and in rhythm, and even in some cases in melody also. At first the Chorales were not harmonized; there was not the ordinary chording of the top-note or melody, but rather, there were great and majestic inner melodic parts -- polyphonic melodies or harmonies independent of "cantus firmus" or mother melody. Set in this strict contrapuntal style, these chorales were customarily sung as follows: the people sang the melody, while the choir sustained the other parts.

The melody had a characteristic "church" quality, being of a large, bold, heavy type, such as would carry "tons of weight of voices", says Dr. H. Augustine Smith. The melodies were given to great ranges in music; they were difficult to sing and not adaptable to small groups. In harmony with time-honored custom, the melody was at first in the tenor, but as composers found it essential to consider the vocal limitations of a mass of untrained singers, a simpler arrangement was introduced, in which the Chorale was harmonized, with the melody in the upper voice, and the harmonic support in the lower voices. This resulted in a considerable artistic loss.

In respect to rhythm, the alterations have been equally striking. The present chorale is usually written in notes of

equal length, one note to a syllable, with meter in most cases double, rarely triple. This gives to the Chorale a singularly grave, solid, and stately character. There was far more variety in the primitive chorale: the movement was more flexible, and the frequent groups of notes to a syllable imparted a buoyancy and warmth unknown to the rigid modern form, although the trend is toward restoring the somewhat regular rhythm of the older form of the Chorale. The "holds" which were originally used (fermatas), to mark the ends of the lines as we mark poetry with periods, were never meant to be held over, as is frequently done today by those singing chorales. This accounts for the tendency among compilers of the newest books, such as Dr. Smith, in his New Church Hymnal, to eliminate these holds and to permit the chorale to march straight forward.

In brief, this is the general difference between the Chorale as it has conventionally appeared in modern hymnals, and the primitive form, as it appeared in the early collections.

The significance of these early hymnals appears thus to be very great, in that they made the Chorales readily available to the layman, in a form which not only rendered the musical setting for the words easily comprehensible, but which also served to cultivate homophony. This latter contributed largely to the future of hymn singing in those lands which most faithfully preserved the Lutheran musical heritage.

CHAPTER VII

THE CHORALE TRANSPLANTED

A. The Decline of Hymnody in Germany.

Whatever estimate the musical critic may be inclined to place upon the theological changes wrought in Germany by the Pietistic and Rationalistic movements, he has usually agreed that the years 1680 to 1817 mark a period in which Germany sustained an irreparable loss with respect to her hymnody. False tastes began to mark the general religious temperament. The Chorale, with its homely and rugged vigor, grated upon the shallow and critical spirits of a more genteel Lutheranism, and

they began to smooth out and polish the old rhymes, and supplant the choral melodies and harmonies with the prettinesses and languishing graces of the Italian cantilena. As the sturdy inventive power of conservative church musicians was no longer available or desired, recourse was had, as in old times, to secular material, but not as formerly to the song of the people, -- honest sincere, redolent of the soil, -- but rather to the light, artificial strains of the fashionable world, the modish Italian opera, and the affected pastoral poesy. . . As the stern temper of the Lutheran era grew soft in an age of security and indifference, so the grand old choral was neglected, and its¹ performance grew perfunctory and cold.

The Pietistic movement was remarkable for the many-sidedness of its musical expression, this being sometimes,

¹DICKINSON, Music in the Western Church, p.267.

"fresh and lively, full of devotional fervor, but sometimes degenerate into a playful and irreverent sentimentalism."²

Pietism, while a more or less effective protest against cold ceremonialism and theological intolerance, and a potent influence in substituting a warmer heart service in place of dogmatic pedantry, failed to contribute any new stimulus to the church song; for the Pietists either endeavored to discourage church music altogether, or else imparted to hymn and melody a quality³ of effeminacy and sentimentality.

It should be noted, however, that during the period in which Pietism flourished within Lutheranism, there was a productive period in the hymnody of the German Reformed Church. The hymns written by the writers within this movement were the product of an emancipation from the limitations of Genevan Psalmody, and were at least equal in quality to the works of Spener, Francke, Freylinghausen, and others of the school of Halle. Generally speaking, however, the seven decades between 1680 and 1750 marked a decline in German hymnody, which proved to be but a shadow of darker things to come.

The Rationalistic movement dealt a blow to Lutheran hymnody from which it has never recovered; Dickinson is of the opinion that only "a revival of spirituality strong enough to stir the popular heart" can effect any rehabilitation of the musical tradition which was at one time the

² SCHAFF, op. cit., in Julian's Dictionary, p.416.

³ DICKINSON, op. cit., p.266.

glory of German religious life.

Concerning the effect of Rationalism upon the religious music within Lutheranism, Phillip Schaff wrote:

. . . Rationalism broke into the German churches and made sad havoc in the hymn-books and liturgies. It is the period of hymnological revolution. It began with the well-meant zeal for improving old hymns in style and expression and adapting them to the taste of the age. This zeal had some foundation in the uncouth language, the irregular rhymes, the antiquated words, and the Latinisms which disfigure many hymns of the 16th and 17th centuries. But it did not stop there. Klopstock, himself a great poet, published in 1758, along with his own spiritual odes, twenty-nine of the old hymns in altered form. He was followed by a swarm of hymnological tinkers and poetasters who had no sympathy with the theology and poetry of the grand old hymns of the faith; weakened, diluted, mutilated, and watered them, and introduced these 4 misimprovements into the churches.

Within the Lutheran church of this period, there were endless doctrinal strifes, which "repressed those unquestioning enthusiasms which are the only source of a genuinely expressive popular hymnody."⁵ It would indeed be difficult to imagine a religious poet with sufficient bifurcation of mind to be able to read Strauss' Das Leben Jesu, or the results of the atomization of the Old Testament by members of the Graf-Wellhausen school, and then to turn directly to the production of a Chorale

⁴ Op. cit., p.417.

⁵ DICKINSON, op. cit., p.266.

such as "O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden" or "Durch Adam's Fall ist ganz verderbt."

Thus, German Protestantism became so thoroughly altered in spirit that its outstanding musical achievement, the Chorale, was no longer at home there. Viewing this situation, the student of musical history is prompted to ask such questions as the following: Will the Chorale be transplanted to some more favorable and congenial soil? If so, will it find it necessary to create a new tradition, or will it find a congenial location already prepared? Will it exert in its new home an influence parallel to that which it exerted in Germany in the days of the infancy of the Reformation?

B. The Musical Situation Within the Anglican Reformation.

It is quite outside the province of this thesis to trace the character of the Reformation in England; but it is essential to observe two or three trends within that movement which were of deep significance to the English musical scene during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Hatred of the Papacy served, from the beginning of the reform movement in England, to discredit the use of the Latin hymn. Likewise, the Puritan movement within

Anglicanism "excluded almost every thing but actual Scripture from the service of praise..."⁶ Nevertheless, there existed within the British temperament a love for the vernacular song which was akin to the same spirit within the German people. Hymns and carols were a part of the religious life of England (in an extra-liturgical sense) long before the days of Henry VIII. Even the Puritans found it expedient to concede to popular demand to the extent of multiplying Paraphrases of the Psalms.

Within the liturgy of the Church of England, the development of hymnody was restricted somewhat by the large portion of fixed offices.⁷ Thus, the chant, and the figured music of the choir largely dominated the scene, so that the Cathedral-type of service was for many decades after the Reformation regarded as a norm, while congregational singing remained something of an "extra-curricular activity" in the Church of England.

Even the chantings and the anthems of the regular service became the targets of the diatribes of the Puritans, who long before the breaking of windows and the demolition of organs had denounced the "trowling of psalms from one side of the choir to the other, with the squeaking of

⁶ BENNETT, H. Leigh, English Hymnody, Early, in Julian's Dictionary of Hymnology, p.343.

⁷ DICKINSON, op. cit., p.332.

chanting choristers, disguised in white surplices. . ."⁸

And if were the fate of the dignified music of the Anglican offices, what worse lot should be expected to befall the congregational "uninspired" song?

Thus, the development of an English hymnody corresponding to that of early Lutheranism was delayed for a century and a half.⁹ But after the Restoration, when the psalmody of the Puritans had reached the limit of attenuation, the pendulum began to swing in the other direction.

Like a sun-burst, opening a brighter era, came the Wesleyan movement, and in the same period the hymns of Dr. Isaac Watts. . . The sweet and fervent lyrics of Charles and John Wesley struck a staggering blow at the prestige of the "inspired" psalmody. Watts's hymns were already written, but had as yet taken no hold upon either dissenters or churchmen. The example of the Methodists was a revelation of the power that lies in popular song when inspired by conviction, and as was said of the early Lutheran choral, so it might be said of the Methodist hymns, that they won more souls than even the ¹⁰ preaching of the evangelists.

Thus, from both the Nonconformists and the new Wesleyan movement came a musical movement strikingly like to that within early Lutheranism.

It would be inspiring to find some evidence for a

⁸DICKINSON, op. cit., p.371.

⁹Ibid., p.374.

¹⁰Ibid., p.379.

direct connection between the English hymn-singing which was an unofficial part of Anglican religious life at the time of the Reformation, and the Chorale-movement in Germany. Unhappily, evidence that such a connection existed is lacking. Rev. H. Leigh Bennett suggests that "The English hymn-singing at the Reformation was the echo of that which roused the enthusiasm of Germany under Luther."¹¹ There was indeed a reflection of the work of Luther and Melancthon in the Psalter of Miles Coverdale, The Goostly Psalmes,¹² but there was no large-scale importation of the Chorale into England until much later.

From the foregoing, it appears that there developed within England a vernacular hymnody, largely independent of the Chorale-movement in Germany, but inspired by the same spirit. Its development was delayed by several factors, but with the rise of the strong evangelical spirit in the former half of the eighteenth century, there came to fruition a tradition in English hymnody akin to that in Lutheranism, and which was destined to receive both modification and strength from the (belated) introduction of the German Chorale into its worship.¹³

¹¹BENNETT, op. cit., p.345.

¹²BENNETT, Goostly Psalmes, Julian's Dictionary, 442.

¹³WINKWORTH, Christian Singers of Germany, iii.

C. The Chorale Transplanted to England and America.

It has been conceded by all who are familiar with the subject that Catherine Winkworth has made the largest single contribution to the matter of familiarizing the English-speaking world with the hymnody of Germany. In comment upon this subject, the Rev. Theodore Kübler, longtime Minister of the German Protestant Reformed Church, in Hooper Square, London, says:

Among these (translations of collections of German hymns) the *Lyra Germanica*, by Catherine Winkworth, is, if a German may judge, not only the greatest favourite with the public, but decidedly the best, especially for private devotion, since it contains both the best¹⁴ hymns and the best renderings.

The movement toward the translation of German hymns into English began with the Moravians. Colonies of these in England translated many of the hymns contained in the Moravian Hymn Book, from the German of course. About a thousand hymns were thus made available to English readers.¹⁵ John and Charles Wesley likewise engaged in translation¹⁶ of German hymns, especially those of Paul Gerhardt.

But the more significant phase of the introduction of German hymns in English translation began with the spread

¹⁴Historical Notes to the Lyra Germanica, p.viii.

¹⁵Ibid., p.x.

¹⁶Ibid., p.10f.

of German literature in England, and "when the study of the German language and literature became much more common than before. . ."¹⁷ The year 1841 is significant in this respect, marking the appearance of Sacred Hymns from the German, by Miss Frances Elizabeth Cox. This musical work carried the German and English texts in parallel columns. Her translations of "Jesus lebt mit ihm auch ich" by Christian Fürchtegott Gellert¹⁸ and "Wenn in Leidenstagen" by Henry Sigismund Oswald, have remained in current use, although the book itself had but a limited circulation.

The Rev. Arthur Tozer Russell published in 1851 his Psalms and Hymns, partly Original, partly Selected, for the Use of the Church of England, which contained a number of paraphrases and translations of German hymns, which unfortunately did not become a popular work. In 1854 there appeared a translation of Luther's Spiritual Songs, made by Richard Massie; and in 1864 the same author published his Lyra Domestica.¹⁹

The first edition of the Lyra Germanica by Catherine Winkworth appeared in 1855, being known as the First Series. The Second Series appeared in 1858, and went through several editions. Miss Winkworth's labors in this volume contributed largely to the Chorale Book for England, which contained, in

¹⁷KÜBLER, op. cit., p.xi.

¹⁸FISCHER, Kirchenlieder-Lexikon, I-II, p.390.

¹⁹JULIAN, Dict. of Hymnology, p.717.

addition to many of the hymns of the Lyra Germanica, seventy-two others, translated by Miss Winkworth, with original tunes.

The importance of the Lyra Germanica is thus very great. Miss Winkworth's "Preface" to this great work indicated her broad understanding of the German musical scene, from the time of the Reformation onward; and her selection of hymns for translation indicated a large insight into the musical needs of the English-speaking religious world. She especially admired the hymns of Paul Gerhardt, including a number of them in her translations.²⁰ Her work was noteworthy for its scope, Kübler paying profuse tribute to her exhaustive investigation of the field of German hymnody.²¹

By means of the labors of these nineteenth-century translators, the introduction of German hymns into England, begun in the time of the Wesleys, was virtually completed; and the rugged music of the early Lutheran Reformation was made available, through sympathetic sources, to the English-speaking religious world. Here it found a new home, where it could exert its influence in surroundings more favorable than it had found in its native land for a century or more.

²⁰ WINKWORTH, C. Lyra Germanica, p.xiii et seq.

²¹ KÜBLER, T. Historical Notes to the L. G. p.viii.

D. Influence of the Transplanted German Hymn
in British and American Protestant Worship.

Chapter I of this thesis, under the caption of "Nature and Extent of the Inquiry" stated a position with which not all students of religious history will be disposed to agree, namely, that Anglo-American Protestantism is today the best exponent and embodiment of the spirit and message of the Lutheran Reformation. In other words, it is the opinion of the writer that the Lutheran Evangelical Church in Germany has long neglected (and frequently repudiated) the principles upon which it was founded; and that to some extent the Anglican Church, and to a much greater extent the Nonconformist churches in Great Britain and the Lutheran and Arminian churches, have preserved the real spirit of the Lutheran Reformation.

It must be acknowledged at the outset that any examination of the hymnals in use by these English-speaking denominations can necessarily be but partial. And yet there are hymn-collections which may be considered representative; and from the amount of German hymnody which these preserve, some conclusions may be drawn. In addition, it may be possible to form some judgment of the qualitative effect of these transplanted Chorales by an examination of the type of hymn which has been most readily accepted.

For the purpose of a quantitative analysis of the influence of German hymnody upon the music-worship of Anglo-American Protestantism, the writer has chosen (perhaps arbitrarily) the following:

The Hymn Book

The New Church Hymnal

The Oxford American Hymnal

The Harvard University Hymn Book

1. The Chorales in The Hymn Book.

This hymnal, being the official hymn book of The Church of England in Canada, may be fairly considered to be representative of the Anglican musical taste of the present day. In this collection, there are thirteen hymns translated from the German, these being largely derived from the writers of the Pietistic period. Only one hymn from the pen of Martin Luther is included, that being the translation of "Ein' feste Burg" by Thomas Carlyle.²²

This hymnal contains forty-three German melodies, including one from the Christlichs Gesangbüchlein; three from Geistliche Lieder, Leipzig edition; one from the Wittenberg edition of the same book; and two from the Lieder Buch für Kleinkinder-Schulen. There is a conspicuous absence of the more rugged melodies of the earlier Lutheran

²² The Hymn Book, p. 391.

Chorale-books, and likewise, (although this does not bear directly upon the subject of this thesis) there are no melodies by Isaac Watts, John Wesley, or Charles Wesley.

2. The Chorales in the New Church Hymnal.

This hymnal lent itself most readily to analysis, due to the careful and systematic system of superscription employed by the compiler. Dr. Smith has included fifty-two Chorale-melody-usages, excluding (which is perhaps again arbitrary) those by Beethoven, Haydn, and Handel. This number included one melody each from: the Katholisches Gesangbuch (Vienna, 1774), and the St. Gall Gesangbuch (1863); and two from the Gesangbuch of the Bohemian Brethren (1566).

This collection (including 512 hymns, exclusive of Chants) included thirty-one Chorales translated from the German, covering a wide range of authors, among whom were notably Martin Luther, Johann Crüger, Johann Walther, and Nicholas v. Zinzendorf. From the foregoing, it will appear that the New Church Hymnal comprehends a wide field of German hymnody, being at the same time highly selective.

3. The Chorales in the Oxford American Hymnal.

This hymnal, edited by Carl F. Pfatteicher, and designed especially for use in "Schools and Colleges", contains some one hundred seventy-seven melodies of German

Chorale origin. There are also, out of the three hundred eighty-seven hymns, eighty-five translated from the German. Forty-three of these are translations of Catherine Winkworth. These eighty-five include poems from nearly all of the important Chorale writers of the Lutheran movement.

Of the four hymnals under consideration, the Oxford American Hymnal contains the largest percentage of both German hymns and of German hymn-tunes. Indeed, the book creates the impression of being overly-German; and it is debatable whether this large introduction of translated hymns will find a ready reception in either England or America. In time it may be possible to familiarize the average College and University worshiper with this large body of transplanted hymnody; and if so, the result will be a great enrichment of musical worship.

4. The Chorales in the Harvard University Hymn Book.

The Harvard Hymnal represents a medium amount of Chorale material. Out of its two hundred ninety-five hymns, twenty-two are translations of German Chorales, nine being the translations of Catherine Winkworth. Of the melodies, forty-eight are from German collections, there being one each from the three Lutheran song-books of 1524,²³ and three attributed to Martin Luther.

²³See page 92 of this Thesis.

The arrangement of the superscriptions, which indicate the origin of both words and melodies, is designed to familiarize the user with the sources of his hymnody, and, together with that of the New Church Hymnal, cannot be praised too highly. These two hymnals appear to have a common objective with respect to the introduction of the best in German hymnody: they include the outstanding productions of the German Evangelical Church, without appearing obtrusive or revolutionary. Quantitatively, they are approximately equal with respect to the amount of Chorale material utilized.

5. The Qualitative Influence of the German Chorale upon Anglo-American Protestant Music Worship.

To attempt to render a detailed analysis of the type of German hymn which most readily lent itself to being transplanted to Anglo-American religious soil would be to expand this Thesis beyond its reasonable limits. There is, however, one outstanding deduction that can be made from a consideration of the type of Chorale which has won its place in our hymnody. An examination of the period in which the majority of adopted hymns were written or composed will reveal that they come from the era of German hymnody which is characterized by Koch²⁴ as being outstandingly

²⁴Geschichte des Kirchenliedes, I, p.452f.

objective in outlook. It is this factor which is of the largest significance in the evaluation of the qualitative influence of the German Chorale upon Anglo-American Protestant music worship.

The Protestantism of Great Britain and America may be likened to a major river as it proceeds to its source: it represents the confluence of many smaller streams of religious influence. Continentals are frequently at a loss to understand, especially, the religious situation in the United States. And yet there are definitely traceable factors within our religious structure, whose operation may be traced historically.

If there be one feature within our Protestantism (this is true in a somewhat lesser degree in Great Britain) which more than another might lead to its decadence, it is the tendency toward subjectivism. The intensely evangelical and evangelistic nature of the more progressive denominations of the nineteenth century contributed to this trend. It is as a corrective to this that, in the opinion of the writer, the influence of the German Chorale has been most potent in a positive sense, upon our religious life. Whereas the music of many of our denominations has inclined to be introspective, and at times to partake of the "prettiness" which marked the decline of German music during the era of Pietism, there has been always the rugged, extroverted influence of the transplanted German hymn to correct and to

lift the level of the congregational singing.

CONCLUSIONS

The pursuit of the investigation of which this Thesis is the result has brought to light (in some cases) or to focus (in others) the following conclusions:

1. Among the forces which preceded the Lutheran Reformation in Germany, and which were contributive to it, no small importance should be attached to the tendency, which grew under suppression and subordination, toward the development of a popular, vernacular hymnody.

2. The power of the German Reformation to preserve its essential character, and to extend and propagate itself resided primarily in its character as a popular movement, enlisting the active participation of its adherents in its worship. And the musical aspect of common participation was a factor scarcely less potent than the vernacularization of the Holy Scriptures and the Offices of worship.

3. Under the difficulties and insecurities which attended Lutheranism during the first century and a quarter of its existence, there developed within Germany a sacred musical form, the Chorale, which embodied the soul of a great people's religious pattern, and which proved to be universal and racial in its appeal.

4. The Chorale exerted an incalculable influence upon the development of the subsequent German musical tradition, inspiring the endeavors of a long series of musicians, whose gifts were employed in the service of the Church. The musical trend which they precipitated, and toward whose culmination they were strongly instrumental, reached its full flower in the work of Johann Sebastian Bach, who as an underpaid and overworked church-organist, carried the Chorale-prelude, the Cantata, and the Sacred Passion to their highest peak of development.

5. During the first two centuries of Lutheranism, the Chorale was a powerful agency in religious education. This was recognized by Martin Luther; and its utilization was characteristic of the Evangelical Church during the years of her strongest influence.

6. Two movements within German Lutheranism served to turn her away from her best traditions, namely, Pietism and Rationalism. The former subjectivized the Chorale; the latter emptied it of its deep meaning and left it devoid of power. Therefore, the center of gravity of the true Lutheran tradition in music worship shifted to the Anglo-American scene.

7. Circumstances hindered the development of a sacred musical form like the Chorale during the first century and a half of the English Reformation. There

existed within the Arminian sector of British religious life, however, a spirit parallel to that which gave birth in Germany to the spiritual song; and this spirit produced some worthy hymns. More significant was its contribution toward creating a favorable ground into which the Chorale could be transplanted.

8. The translation of some German hymns by the Wesleys, and by Moravians in England, initiated the work of importing the Chorale into Anglo-American Protestant music worship. More widespread and of deeper significance was the work of a number of translators during the first half of the nineteenth century, notable among whom was Catherine Winkworth. This effort served to effectively transplant the Chorale into the soil of the religious life of Great Britain and North America.

9. The Chorale has been most readily adopted by the Nonconformist Churches of Great Britain, and by the sects in America which are somewhat removed from Anglicanism.

10. The Chorale, translated and adopted by the English-speaking religious world, has wielded a large influence as a corrective against the subjectivism which was a derivative of the evangelical character of the message and mode of the Protestant Sects. It has served to elevate the general tone of their hymnals, to dignify and deepen their worship, and to preserve in them the true Lutheran tradition of the musical function in the Church.

APPENDIX

THE INFLUENCE OF THE CHORALE
UPON MORAVIAN HYMNODY

It is significant that the Moravian Brethren were the first to publish what may be properly termed a Protestant Hymnal. Published in 1501 at Prague, and in the Bohemian language, it contained translations of old Latin hymns, plus original vernacular compositions by John Hus and Bishop Luke of Prague.¹ The ties of affinity between the Bohemian Brethren and the German Protestants were strong; and it is not surprising that the Chorale exercised a strong influence upon Moravian Hymnody.

As a representative collection of Moravian sacred music, the writer has examined the book Hymnals and Liturgies of the Moravian Church, published by authority of the Provincial Synod, Bethlehem, Pa. in 1920. As an historical source, there is none better than the Historische Nachricht vom Brüder-Gesangbuche des Jahres 1778, u.s.w.

Moravian hymnody falls, broadly, into two divisions:

Lieder aus der alten Brüderkirche, deren Zeitdauer (theils vor der Reformation, theils nach derselben) 170 Jahre, von 1457-1627, umfasst; und aus der erneuerten Brüderkirche; von der Zeit an, da die ersten Einwohner von Herrnhut sich zur Gemeinde zusammenschlossen, im Jahr 1727. Zu diesen gehören ganz vorzüglich die Lieder des Grafen Zinzendorf, deren mehre schon aus frühern Jahren sind. 2

¹Hymnal and Liturgies of the Moravian Church, p.3.

²Historische Nachricht vom Brüder-Gesangbuche, p.8.

It falls within the scope of this thesis to consider the former period, which coincides roughly with the period from Luther to the Thirty Years' War. The Moravian Hymnal contains, in its 950 hymns and songs, a wide variety of of compositions. Of this number, no less than 58 are derived from Chorales of the period, 1517-1648. Composers and authors most largely represented are: Decius, Gerhardt, Luther, Matthesius, Nicolai, and Ringwaldt. In this collection are also 38 German Popular Melodies, most of which date to the early period. These are the material out of which the Chorales were made.

It is significant that of all writers, Paul Gerhardt is responsible for the largest number of hymns included from the early German hymnists. Fourteen of his hymns have a place in this collection. This is in harmony with a tendency which appears to even the casual study of this Hymnal, the tendency to include a large amount of hymn-material from the pen of mystics and Pietists.

From the foregoing, it is reasonable to conclude that Moravian Hymnody had a decided preference for the more subjective type of Chorale. This does not mean that there are included none of the majestic, objective hymns; but in general, Moravianism was more largely indebted to later of Germany's hymn-writers, with their tendency toward the inwardness which marked Pietism. It showed a preference for Philipp Jacob Spener, and for the Halle tradition, of which "Der Genius . . . ist ein herzliches Verlangen nach einen wahren und thätigen Christenthum."

BOSTON UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL

An Abstract of a Thesis

THE INFLUENCE OF THE GERMAN
PROTESTANT REFORMATION UPON THE
MUSIC WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH

by

Anne Wicker Kuhn

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THE INFLUENCE OF THE GERMAN
PROTESTANT REFORMATION UPON THE
MUSIC WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH

During the first quarter of the sixteenth century there came to concrescence a religious revolution, whose antecedents had been manifesting themselves for several centuries. This movement, known as the Lutheran Reformation, was destined to react profoundly, not only upon every phase of German life, but likewise upon the religious life of lands outside Germany. The political and social repercussions of this Reformation have been the subjects of full treatment by historians, who have tended to neglect the significant cultural impact of the new movement.

This Thesis represents an attempt to evaluate, in the light of the four centuries which have elapsed, the artistic and cultural aspect of the Lutheran Reformation, with particular reference to the influence which it exerted upon the sacred-musical tradition in Germany.

It is the opinion of most of the writers upon this subject that Lutheranism was spread quite as much by means of the instrumentality of the Chorale, as by the vocal preaching of her doctrines by her clergy. This musical form epitomized the religious soul of the German people, and was the basis for a phenomenal artistic development within German musical art, which reached its peak with the work

of Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750). After the death of Bach, the Chorale declined, due chiefly to the influence of two religious trends, Pietism and Rationalism, until the rugged religious poems and melodies which made such large contribution to the propagation of the Evangelical message were no longer at home there.

It is the opinion of the writer that the Chorale was transplanted to a more congenial soil, that of Anglo-American Protestantism, and especially that branch of Protestantism which was dominated by the Arminian theological tradition. In England, the development of the popular hymn had been arrested by the peculiar circumstances by which the Reformation was effected. However, the Moravian and the Wesleyan movements produced some translations of German Chorales into the English language.

The most significant movement by which the Chorale became naturalized in the English-speaking religious world was that of the nineteenth century, when large numbers of German hymns were made available by the tireless efforts at research and translation by a number of scholars, outstanding among whom was Catherine Winkworth.

This Thesis attempts to analyze the religious pattern, with a view to discovering, first, what conditions prevalent there were capable of being affirmatively influenced by the introduction of music of the character

of the Chorales; and second, to determine both the quantitative and the qualitative influence of the Chorale upon the music worship of the English-speaking churches of Great Britain and America, particularly the Nonconformist branches in England and the denominations in the United States.

The Lutheran musical tradition is considered to be the most truly "Protestant" in character -- that is, it represents the spirit of the Reformation, with its insistence upon the priesthood of all believers, and upon the significance of the individual worshiper. The writer believes that this tradition will find for itself a home so long as Protestantism lasts; if it become neglected in one land, it will find acceptance in another. And wherever it is accorded a welcome, it will exert a strong influence for spiritual warmth, combined with spiritual depth.

The method of the writer has been that of carefully investigating the works of the chief authorities upon the subjects involved, including the antecedents of the German Lutheran Chorale, the life and work of Luther (including his reform of the worship of the Church), the development of the Chorale, the parallel development of a vernacular musical tradition in England, and the introduction of the Chorale into the music worship of the Anglo-American religious scene.

The findings of the study include those reached by an examination of representative Hymnals in use by religious

groups in the several branches of Anglo-American Protestantism, and representation, numerically, in these collections is made a basis for a quantitative evaluation of the abiding influence of the Chorale upon the religious life of the respective groups; while the conclusion reached concerning the qualitative influence involves more especially the nature of the hymns adopted by English hymnals from the German religious musical heritage.

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